MAṆI-MEKHALAI.

A Great Epic and one of the Five Great Classics of Tamil.

Rendered into English

BY

THE REV. DR. G. U. POPE, M. A., D. D.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

Mr. John Vansomeran Pope had the kindness to entrust me with all the miscellaneous papers of his father. Among them I found this excellent resume of the famous Tamil classic called *Maṇimekhalai*. I published it for the first time in the *Siddhānta Dīpikā*, Vol. XI., and XII., and is now issued in book-form. His translation of *Puṟapporuḷ-Veṇbā-Mālai* and *Puṟanāṉūṟu* which had already been published in

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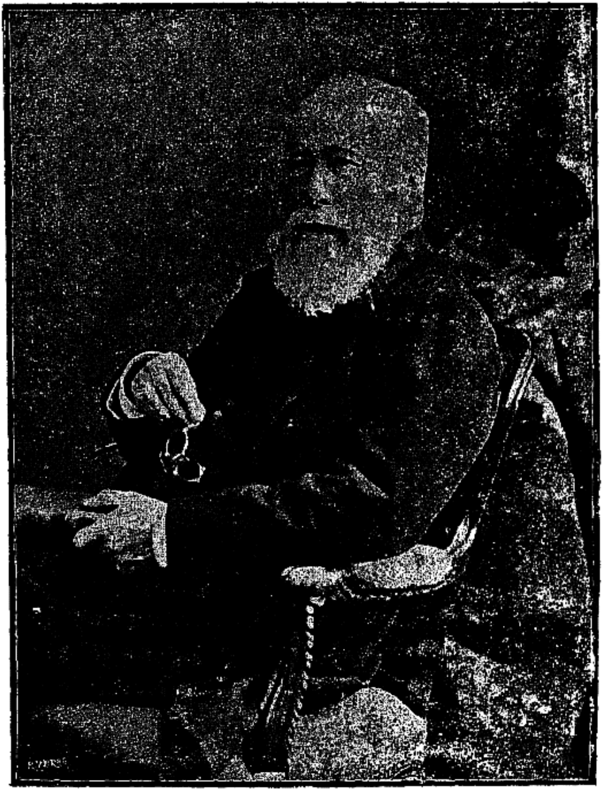
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MAṆI-MEKHALAI.

INTRODUCTION.

Among the treasures of Tamil poetry, comparatively little known by Tamilians themselves, and quite unknown to Euro- peans, is the romantic Epic of which Maṇi-Mekhalai is the heroine. It is a poem in thirty books each containing from fifty to five hundred lines. An edition of this has been published by the learned Paṇḍit V. Sāminātha Aiyar, the Tamiḻ Professor in the Madras Presidency College, (1898). This is a work which lovers of the higher Tamiḻ will doubtless read. Our purpose here is, to prepare the English student for its perusal, as well as to give the general reader some idea of the

contents of a very very interesting work, full of various information regarding Buddhism in South India, and many kindred topics.

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* The author of this poem was called 'Sāttanār, the grain-merchant of Madura.' The poet is said to have belonged to the last Madūra College. This makes him a contemporary of the author of the Kuraḷ, though there is a great confusion about the whole history of that college, or Sañgam. Since there is in the Maṇi-Mekhalai an undoubted quotation from the Kuraḷ, with aeulogistic reference to its author, and also obvious references to the Nāladiyār, its date must be later than that of those poets. It was he who made known to the Sēra King, Senguttuvan, the history of Kaṇṇagi, and caused a temple to be erected in her honour, where her worship was celebrated. At that time, there were present the king's brothers and the young prince Ilamgo-Aḍigaḷ, who had become an

ascetic, and composed the poem called Silappathigāram. He was the author of many other poems, and was variously celebrated. His name indicates that he was a Jain ; but the tenor of the poem is unmistakably Buddhistic. It was a period in South Indian history when men's minds seem to have been altogether unsettled in regard to religious matters.

It must be premised that the Tamil poem entitled the "Chapter of the Anklet," of which, on a former occasion some account has been given, should be studied as preliminary to the Maṇi-Mēkhalai.

The wealthy merchant *Kōvalan* whose intrigue with the songstress *Māthavi* is there related, was the father of Maṇi- Mēkhalai,[1] and

this Māthavi was her mother. After the death of Kōvalan, and the exaltation of his wife to a kind of goddess, which is told with such elaboration in the "Chapter of the Anklet" the songstress with her daughter went into a Bud- dhist religious house, where she became a recluse and Maṇi- Mekhalai was intended for the same vocation; but she was soon, in a very remarkable way removed from

the care of her mother, and after a variety of most wonderful experiences, found her way to

the monastery of a great Buddhist teacher,

where she was thoroughly trained in the Buddhistic system;

and in the last chapter she is left on the very verge of *Nirvāṇa*. The full exposition of

Buddhism, and incidentally of the Jain system, as of the contemporary Hindu systems also is obviously

the main scope of the poem.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUMMONS TO THE FEAST OF INDRA AT KĀVIRI-PUM-PAṬṬINAM,[2] (CAVARIPATTAM).

The city in which Maṇi-Mekhalai was born was Kāviri-

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[1] This name is from the Sanskrit, and signifies "Pearl necklace."

There was a sacred nymph whose name was "Maṇi Mekhalai-Deyvam,' whom they regarded as their guardian spirit. Hence the name was given to the child. This guardian spirit acts a great part as will be seen in the story.

[2] There is no doubt that this ancient city, situated at the mouth of the Kaveri river was a great emporium in ancient times as the capital of the Choḻa kingdom, from which the whole coast took the name of Choḻa-

Pum-Pattinam,* the ancient capital of the Chōla kings. Its ancient name was Pugār, so beautifully sung of in the introductory chapter of "The Anklet". It was a great commercial

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Mandalam (Coromandel). It shared with Madura, the capital of the Pāndyan kingdom the honour of being famous throughout both Eastern, Western, and Northern regions. There are many indications of foreign influences in the legions of both cities. One object of the poet certainly was to celebrate the praises and to explain the antiquities of what was at that time the chief city of the Chola kings. It takes its name from the fact that there the Kaveri river flowed into the sea. It would appear that several cities have been built in the neighbourhood, which have been successively destroyed by the sea. The poem describes it as it was in the time of Karikāl, one of the most renowned of the Chola kings. It would seem to have contained temples, colleges, and monastaries of every sect or school then flourishing in South India. And

what seems to us surprising is that they appear to have dwelt in perfect harmony. In fact, it seems as though the majority of the people worshipped indiscriminately at all the shrines. Around the city and the royal residence were a series of gardens planted with trees, shrubs, and plants interspersed with memorials to the dead and with various consecrated buildings. Each of these was surrounded by a high wall and there were gates strictly guarded, leading from one to the other. In the vicinity of these gates, statues were placed in which various divine or semi-divine personages were supposed to dwell, frequently exchanging a word with the passers by. Resembling somewhat our own great cities, they yet abounded in elements that appear to us exceedingly grotesque. It is to be remembered too that the city which is spoken of by Ptolemy, the geographer, as the emporium of *Chaberis*, was a seaport to which ships from all parts of the then known world brought cargoes of merchandise, and much else, which were speedily conveyed to the inland towns. In fact, in those ancient times, South India was by no means isolated from the rest of the world. This accounts for the existence of words and ideas foreign to most parts of ancient India, when it is

remembered that Greeks from Alexandria, Arabs from Mecca jostled in its streets with Romans, Hindus of every class, and with men from all the Eastern regions, it will be seen that the feast of Indra must have afforded a varied and interesting spectacle.

[8] Compare the *Naladiyar*, CH. xxvi and xxxii.

city in the time of Ptolemy, who writes of it under the name of *Chaberis Emporion*. It was here that Kōvalan lived, whose heroic wife was afterwards deified. It is said to have been the peculiar care of the great Tamil sage Agastiyar. An ancient king begged of Indra [*] that, once in the year, for twenty-eight days, he would vouchsafe to visit the city, and his request was granted. From generation to generation, this was the great festival of the kingdom.

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[*] In the account of the inauguration of the feast of Indra we get some glimpses of the arrangements of the city. It seems to have been divided into two parts, of which one lay along the harbour and

presented the characteristics of modern sea-port towns. The other which was some distance inland was the abode of the wealthy. There was the palace, and its streets were full of the abodes of luxury and splendor. Between these two, was a square of considerable extent, where the markets were held and bazaars of every kind of merchandise were found. There were two especial demons called the 'demon-of-the market' and the 'demon-of-the-square' who had shrines and images at either end of this square. We are told that their especial function was to punish, and even to devour those that were guilty of gross sins ; and the inhabitants are heard saying to one another "if we neglect to keep the feast, the Bhūtas will cease to guard us by punishing wicked persons." These demon-shrines were said to have built by an ancient king of the city called Musugamtam which seems to be a corruption of Muchukunda whose history is given in Wilson's Vishṇu-Purāṇa ; but I can find no trace of any king of that name in South India. No doubt very much of Paurāṇic legends was current in those regions. It is curious that the plagues of society from whom

the Bhūtas had to protect the city are referred to as of six classes, all guilty of various crimes and all assuming the garb of ascetics, and making their garb of devotees a means of concealing their evil practices. Such characters were evidently to be found in great numbers in the monasteries of all sects. They are referred to in the Kural also.

It is to be noted also that even to this day every native town has in addition to its temple or temples some older shrine, obviously a survival of ancient demonology. In times of panic, it is to this shrine that the people crowd. In Madras it exists and is much frequented. The temples may be more splendid but it is the demon-temple that has the power.

While our heroine and her mother were living in the Buddhist monastery, the time of the festival came round, and then the sectaries of the various religions.—Buddhists, Jains and Hindus, came together and said: "let us celebrate the feast of Indra, lest the demons take advantage of our impious neglect, and so the city perish." Accordingly, from out the crystal temple,

the state elephant was led, seated on which the herald proclaimed [5] to all the inhabitants "the season has come, when all the gods leave the heavenly regions deserted, and make themselves visible among mortals. Decorate your temples and your houses, let garlands hang through every street, from

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[5] Great stress is laid in old Tamil verse upon the Drum, which was kept in the precincts of every chieftain's palace, and was treated almost as a kind of lesser divinity. It was made to rest upon a luxurious couch, being constantly cleansed, rubbed with perfumed earth, and covered with wreaths of flowers. On special occasions it was borne forth on the back of the stateliest of elephants. Its deep hollow sound gathered the people around to hear the proclamations of the ruler, specially when he was going forth on some marauding expedition. We are reminded of the Italian Carroch (Carroccio) which in like manner was borne forth in Florence or Padua. ...."

"Hale forth the carroch—trumpets, ho,
"A flourish! Run it in the ancient grooves!
"Back from the bell! Hammer—that whom

behoves

"May hear. .... *(Sordello.)*

An interesting song has been preserved (See *Puṟa-Nāṉṉūṟu* 50) composed by the bard Môçikiranār. One day he had wandered into the courtyard of the palace,—perhaps the palm wine or the richer juices that the *Yāvanar* had brought from over the sea, had proved too strong for him. But, at any rate, he saw the richly ornamented and cushioned couch on which the royal drums were usually placed. These had been removed to be cleansed and anointed, and he threw himself on the unoccupied bed, and fell fast asleep, in which state he was discovered by the king. Now the courtiers, who were jealous of the royal favour he enjoyed, gathered round, anticipating the condign punishment of the intruder, who had transgressed so sorely the rules of palace etiquette. But 6

every window. Let the sound of every species of music be heard throughout all your borders. Let merchants and dealers, in all that is beautiful and precious, fill every avenue.

Let the temples of every religion and sect be crowded with devout worshippers. Let the teachers of every school deliver their lectures, hold disputations, discuss their tenets and promulgate their faith. Thus let the city be filled with peace and gladness." (*To our western ideas it is hard to think that civic peace would be the result of implicit obedience to these latter commands*).

Our story really begins when the great seaport was thus thronged with all the deities from their 31 spheres, and with all varieties of men from every land. There can be no doubt that

Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and many other peoples were among the visitants. The extent to which South India lay open to the commerce of the Western and Northern lands is often not fully

realised by European writers.

the kindly hearted king standing over the sleeper took up a fan with which he smiling cooled the sleeper's brow, and watched over him till he awoke! This is commemorated in the following very natural little lyric:

(STOLEN SLUMBERS.)

'They took the drum to wash, and I meanwhile
resigned myself to slumber on the couch,
with peacock feathers and with gems adorned,
and with the glorious wreath men set on brow
who go to storm the strongholds of a foe.'
The couch was softer than the sea-foam pure,—
on which unwitting I had cast myself.
I slept, and when I woke above me stood
an awful form before whom foemen flee.
I trembled, but he gently waved the fan
above me—bade me sweetly slumber on.
Surely 'twas not to win applause from earthly bards,
But that the deed might echo loud in higher worlds!

There was a curious mixture of ferocity and coarseness, with gentleness and chivalric courtesy, in the department of some of these rugged old worthies of the Tamil lands!

CHAPTER II.

THE CITY IN TROUBLE.

According to the summons given in the former chapter the whole city became one splendid scene of triumphant rejoicing. Those ancient festivals were a strange mixture of religious celebrations, royal and civic pomp, and mercantile activity. They were fairs on a very magnificent scale. It was the custom for all the actresses, dancing girls and songstresses to give magnificent entertainments on these occasions. The variety of accomplishments which some of these performers possessed gave to the exhibitions a character in which the theatre, the music hall, the lecture room, and even the booths of jugglers and fortune-tellers were not wanting. These were

most popular, and indeed quite indispensable to the success of
the feast. Great then was the consternation, when it was
reported that their old favourite, and her young daughter (who
was expected to make her *debut* on the occasion) declined to appear. They had, it was announced, entered a Buddhist
nunnery, where they were under the instruction and training of a Guru whose name was Aravaṇa-aḍigaḷ.[6] Forthwith an
assembly of all the notables of the town,—princes, merchants,
warriors, saints and sages,—was
was dispatched to the recusants.
convened, and an embassy
The embassy consisted of
two persons, Chitrāpati and Vayanthamālai.[7] Chitrāpati, who was the grandmother of Maṇi-Mekhalai, accordingly made her
way to the nunnery, where she was greatly

distressed to find her daughter Māthavi worn and emaciate with the privations of her convent life. On expressing her sorrow, Māthavi replied as follows: "It would be unfitting for my daughter, who is

[6] Adigaḷ = saint.

[7] The former of these ladies was the mother of Mathavi. She was an exceedingly cunning and unscrupulus person, as will appear in the sequel, Vayanthamalai was a friend and companion of Mathavi and had been like her, a dancing girl.

also (by adoption) the daughter of the great Kaṇṇagi,[8] to demean herself by following the life of a dancing girl. And as for myself, when her father, my lover, died in Madura, I in sorrow came hither, and falling at the feet of the great Guru Aravaṇa poured out my sorrows. He said to me:

"Those born on earth share instant woe!

"Those freed from birth high rapture know!
"Clinging desire is cause of human pain!
"Quench that desire and bliss you gain."[8]

He has also taught me the five ways of virtue[9] which are refraining from murder, abstinence from intoxicating drink, avoidance of untruth, absence of sensual desire, and refraining from theft. I therefore cannot come to your festival. Take this my message back." Hearing this reply they stood and while confounded, like those, who have dropped into the sea, a pearl of great price, and then made their way back.

CHAPTER III.

THE ENTRANCE INTO THE FLOWER GARDEN.

Maṇi-Megalai who had listened to all that her mother had said, now began to ponder, the sad story of her father's death, and—this being the destined hour of her spiritual call—was so

overcome with sorrow [10] that her tears fell copiously on the

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[8] These are His four fundamental truths of Buddhism.

'Embodiment is sorrow; Release from it is bliss;
Clinging desire is cause of the for'st;
Extinction of desire brings His second!'

[9] These are His five cardinal virtues. These as given in the text are the five prohibitions: (1) Do not kill; (2) do not drink intoxicants; (3) do not lie; (4) do not indulge in impure habits; and (5) do not steal.

[10] There is something very significant in this sudden access of emotion which caused the innocent girl to shed bitter tears at the remembrance of her parents' sufferings. According to the Buddhist Theology, it marks a definite stage in the religious history of the disciple. It is called in

garland of flowers she wore, and her mother seeing this said to her, "my daughter, go forth into the park and

gather some fresh flowers for your faded garland." Now there was standing by, a bosom friend of her mother, who was of the same profession, and whose name was Sutamati. This friend intervened with a piece of urgent and prudent advice. "It will never do," she said, "for your young daughter to go forth unattended into the midst of the festivities of the city. In one part are the royal preserves where the king's son and the princess are dragging their chariots. In another part are gardens where only the celestials enter, and bazaars are *thronged with mixed* multitudes. No maiden without a guardian may enter there. To show you the necessity for my advice, I will tell you my own history. I am the daughter of a great sage called Kausigan of the city of Sanbai, north of this. I came to this city at a former festival; but a young prince of fairyland riding in his chariot through the sky, bent on the same errand, saw me unattended and carried me off. I lived with him till, tired of my company, he left me here and went back to his fairy home. Since that time,

I dwell a stranger here. You cannot expose your beautiful

Sanskrit HETU-PRABHĀVAM, the meaning of which is somewhat obscure but seems to mean "The showing forth of the Cause," and in

Tamil an equivalent phrase is used for it. It corresponds very closely to the Šaiva idea of ŠAKTI-NIPĀTAM, for a full exposition of which

the reader is referred to the Tiruvāsagam introduction page 46, note 3.

The idea seems to be that at a certain moment, in the soul's progress, the merit of good deeds done in former births and the de-merit of evil deeds counterbalance one another, and the soul being set free begins a new career. In many respects, it answers to the common idea of "Conversion".

The Šaiva system dwells upon it as pre-eminently the result of divine grace; to them it is a step forward from which there is no retrocession: the devout soul is now assured of its final deliverance from embodiment:

it has come to God. We see in the history of Maṇi-Mēkhalai from that moment, she never wavered nor wandered from the way marked out for her; she gave herself up to her appointed work, patiently and humbly, making her way towards the promised consummation.

daughter to such dangers. But there is a garden, sacred to the Buddhists, in which there is a crystal pavilion. It is sacred to the Lord of Grace and Love, the great ascetic, who guards the lives of men. Here many trees grow and flower under his protection. In this sacred pavilion, whose walls are clear crystal, there is a shrine dedicated to his worship. Within that hallowed recess is an altar from which radiates on all sides the splendour of spotless

gems. It is called the Lotus-altar. Here no sound of human speech is ever heard. The thought of each worshipper here speaks direct to the Lord of all. The worshipper, who, thinking of some deity, presents a flower, finds that his votive offering has at once left his hands and found its way to the feet of him for whom the worshipper's thought has directed it." If you ask by what impulse it has made its way thither, you must ponder the action that men's deeds act where his mind goes with them, and are worthless where the soul does not impart power to them. This pavilion was erected by the divine artificer Mayan. In that flowery parterre, your daughter may walk, and I will be her guide."

Having so said, Sutamati and Maṇi-Mekhalai made their way through motley multitudes that thronged the festive city. Here was a hungry ascetic, there were people following crowding after sellers of

toddy. Here were people following montebanks. There they were gazing upon the pictures and inscriptions on the lofty mansions. On little chariots borne by elephants, children were being carried about. Strange shows were exhibited on all sides to the amazed and delighted multitudes. Many of these followed Maṇi-Mekhalai crying out "if this beautiful maiden enter the flowery park, the very swans will be filled with admiration and envy of her stately walk." Thus she proceeded on her way gathering beautiful flowers.

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[11] Compare the story of Arjuna worshipping Krishṇa, and the flowers being found on the Person of the Lord of Kailās.—*Ed.*

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CHAPTER IV.

SHE ENTERS THE CRYSTAL PAVILION.

Here, Sutamati showed our astonished heroine the wealth of beauty that was in the groves, and all the beauty of the lakes that stretched around on all sides.

While she was doing so, Utaya-Kumāran accompanied by a splendid guard of troops, mounted on a chariot, was driving on, restraining with difficulty the State elephant whose name was Kālavēgan (as swift-as-the-wind.)

The people were fleeing in dismay on every side from the cavalcade. Suddenly from a lofty building in the street window of which, he was luxuriously reclining, on a couch of flowers, Eṭṭi-Kumāran called out to the prince "what is it that

distresses you," and then immediately he arose, rushed forth and making lowly salutations to the prince, exclaimed "I have just seen Maṇi-Mēkhalai in poor array going forth to gather flowers in the garden. The moment I saw her, I remembered how her father Kōvalan met with his death in Madura, and losing all control of mind, forgot the music I was playing; this it is, that troubled me." As soon as the prince heard these words, having for many days been madly in love with Maṇi-Mēkhalai, he exclaimed "has she indeed come to visit this grove, I will enter it, seize her and bring her back in my chariot." Thus saying, he drove off, and soon gained the entrance gate of the Uvavanam.

Maṇi-Mēkhalai hearing the noise of his chariot wheels said to Sutamati "

Utaya-Kumāran has fixed his whole desires on me. This I heard Vayantamālai telling my mother. This sounds like his chariot wheels. What can I do in this emergency? " Sutamati caused her to enter the crystal pavilion, and having locked it with Maṇi-Mēkhalai inside, herself went five bow-shots distance and there awaited the prince's approach. Seeing her, he addressed her as follows:—

" You are standing here in this lonely spot. I know that you came here with Maṇi-Mēkhalai! Has she become sensible? Have her rosy lips learnt again to smile? Do her eyes roll round inspiring desire? Has she left the abodes of the Buddhist devotees? Tell me why." Thus he asked and revealed his desire.

Then Sutamati, seeing no way of escape, in distress exclaimed "Oh prince, direct descendant of Karikāla-Peru-Vaḷattan[12] who in his youth in the guise of an old man, settled

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[12] Probably none of the ancient kings, or chieftains of South India has been the subject of more discussion than Karikāl. I shall endeavour to set down exactly all that I can find about him in the Tamil writers without any examination of conflicting opinions, or archæological explanations. He is said to have been the son of the Cēran King whose name was Uruva-Pal-Tēr-Iḷam-Cenni. He is also said to have married the daughter of the chief of Nangur, who seems to have been of not a very distinguished family. His father-in-law is referred to in Paḻa-Moḻi under the name of Perum-Piḍār-Talaiyar. He is referred to in a note appended to Pattu-pāṭṭu II, p. 61.

The commentator's explanation of this is that two persons had a disagreement, and when our hero, who was in his youth, attempted to settle their dispute for them, they replied that he was too young to thoroughly investigate the course of their dispute, whereupon he seemed to have disguised himself and in the shape of an old man, came and heard the whole matter and decided it to their satisfaction. The story is somewhat indistinctly told. There seems to have been a disagreement between him and his elder brothers which led to his leaving home and going to Karavūr, where an elephant despatched from Kari came and kneeling at his feet lifted him into the howdah and carried him to where the people were expecting their king. His name of Karikālan means "burnt foot." It is said that in early childhood he fell into the fire, narrowly escaping with his life, but marked and lamed. He is referred to in four songs of the Puṛa-nānūṛu. These are Nos. 7, 65, 66 and 224 translations of which we give.

Of the ten poems composing the Pattu-pāṭṭu the second and ninth are incribed to him, and from them we may get some idea of what was supposed to be the state of his dominions; [Further notes are missing.—*Ed.*]

the dispute and revealed the truth! Though thou art young in years, thou art old in knowledge. Is there anything that young girls can teach thee? Nothing. Yet one thing, hear me, when I say

What comes from deeds is growth of deeds.
This human body which we wear, know thou
Stripped of its ornamented garb is carrion.
'Tis mere abode of age, disease, and sore decay.
'Tis home of desire that clings, receptacle of faults.
'Tis nest of ants where serpent dwells.
Longings and cares and griefs and tears
Fail not the soul that dwells within.
Oh Mighty One, see thou this empty frame."

But before her words could reach his ears, he saw the form of Maṇi-Mēkhalai within the crystal walls.

CHAPTER V.

THE APPEARANCE OF MAṆI-MEKHAḶAI-DEYVAM.

As soon as Utaya-Kumāran saw the form of Maṇi-Mēkhalai, he rushed away and strove to effect an entrance into the pavilion, and being unable to find any door, groped about it with his hands, and thus exclaimed "what kind of a being is Maṇi-Mēkhalai?" To this she replied "she is one who has entered the ascetic life. She is one who has power to curse the wicked. She is sbsolutely free from sinful desires. It is not fitting that thou shouldst seek her love." To this he replied "be she what she may, she is one who pertains unto me." He then added the question "I know that thou wert one of the nuns of the Jain sect; how hast thou left them and become one of the Buddhists [13] like Mātavi and her daughter." To this

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[13] It clearly appears that the real object of the poem is to represent Buddhism as superior to every form of Hinduism, and especially to the Jain system. Its great interest in fact consists chiefly in this. It is

Sutamati replied "Oh prince, I am the daughter of a Brahman named Kausigan of the city Saṇbai. My mother died when I was a child. One day I went alone to gather flowers in the garden, when a fairy prince seeing me was enamoured and coming down from the sky, carried me away to be his bride; but he afterwards abandonded me in this city. My father, troubled at my disappearance, sought me everywhere, and even came down to bathe in the river Kanniyā-Kumari, where he met some Brahmins from this place, with whom returning, he came across me, and learning my story did not deem me worthy of their society; but took me with him and begged from day to day for our subsistence. One unfortunate day, a cow rushed down and gored him with its horns. I took him in the extremity of his suffering to the Jain devotees, but they refused all help, and in despair went from door to door,

the last effort of Tamil literature to restore Buddhism to the high place which it had occupied before the time of Māṇicka-Vāśagar.

Hence the heartless, pitiless character of the Jain saints is brought out in the story. Many things conspire to show that there was some ground for this. Jainism partly failed from a lack of human sympathy. They seem to have been more anxious to show mercy and pity to the animal creation than to suffering humanity.

Buddhism on the other hand showed an astonishing sympathy with all human infirmity. In India at least they showed a keen sense of the evils and sufferings of men. Buddha is represented everywhere as a tender, most loving friend of men. There is a very great deal in these writings which seems to be a reflection of our Western tradition. The controversies about the date of Maṇi-Mēkhalai seem almost incapable of decision. There are quotations in it from the Kural, and it is in many passages an echo of the Nāladiyār. The hero Utaya-Kumāran is represented as a probably late descendant of a king celebrated in the Pura-Nānūru. On the whole I cannot think of this poem as having an earlier date than the tenth century. There is obviously room as there was undoubted opportunity for the interfiltration of Western ideas. Certainly the idea of Buddha as set forth in this poem is singularily attractive.

imploring assistance. Then there met me a mendicant with an
alms-basin in his hands, with a face gleaming

like the full moon, and with a gold-coloured garment. His name was Sanga-Dharman. This man, whom I knew by his garb to be a Buddhist ascetic came to us full of grace and pity saying "from what are you suffering?" and with many gracious words handed to us the full alms-basin which he carried, and taking my wounded father in his arms and showing us the Buddhists' monastery, saved my father from death. He taught me the revelation of the mighty name,

Our Lord whose nature is all good,
The essence of all that is good in the world,
Who had made experience of all embodiments
Who lived not for himself but for all others,
Who was adorned with all grace that all men need at every time, Who wheels the wheel of every virtue,
Vaman, the conqueror of the demon of lust.

At the feet of him thus made known to me, I bow down; my tongue, in ceaseless praise, extols him and knows no other name. From that time with Mātavi I dwell in the Buddhist home. Therefore it is, that you see me here with Maṇi- Mēkhalai."

The prince Utaya-Kumāran hearing this replied " I know thee now; hence forward I can meet with Maṇi-Mēkhalai through Sittirapati." Saying this and still full of fierce desire, he left the garden. As soon as he had gone, Maṇi-Mēkhalai came forth from the crystal pavilion and said to Sutamati "he has abused me considering me to be a loveless one, a false devotee, one regardless of all rules of decorum, a prostitute ; but yet my heart goes forth towards Utaya-Kumāran. What can be the cause of this ? Is this the nature of love?" As she stood thus pondering,

Maṇi-Mēkhalai-Deyvam disguised as a companion joined them, and entering the crystal pavilion made the circuit of the shrine and rising up over the altar began thus to sing a song of praise.

Sage! Ascetic! Virtuous One! All plenitude!
Thou wert exalted above all virtue known to this earth!.
Thou who hast removed all my sin! Thou who hast killed passion!
Thou first one who knowest all!
Thou who hast transcended Kāman!
Thou who art the defence! Thou who dost destroy evil and fierce
anger!
Thou of the thousand-fold wheel!
I have not a thousand tongues to sing Thy praise.

As she thus sang her exaltic songs, the sun went down and the moon arose on the wondrous scene.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ENCLOSURE OF THE CHAKRAVĀLA-KŌṬṬAM.

While Maṇi-Mēkhalai Deyvam was thus enthusiasticly singing the praises of Buddha before the altar in the Crystal Pavilion, Sutamati and her charge were standing sad and anxious because of the parting words of Utaya-Kumāran. But now turning to them, the nymph inquired the cause of their anxiety. • When she had ascertained this, she said you may be quite certain that the desire of the prince for Maṇi-Mēkhalai will not pass away. He has left this grove considering it as too sacred to admit of his carrying her away from it; but in the street beyond he is waiting for your exit, and if you return thither you cannot possibly escape him. There is however, a gate on the other side of the wall through which you can pass into the extensive enclosure called the

Chakravāḷa-kōṭṭam.

"Why", said Sutamati to her, "do you call it by that high sounding name. All others call it the Burning Ground Enclosure; is it not the cemetery of the city? You call it "the Assembling Place of the Universe." How can it have this name?" The descriptions given in this story are very diffuse and highly ornamented, they had great interest for the people

of those days, containing as they do, all that was known or fancied in regard to the Archæology of the city. In the original, they have a singular poetic grace, which cannot be at all preserved in any translation.

The following then is Maṇi-Mēkhalai-Deyvam's account, of the Chakravāḷa-Kōṭṭam. In

Kāviri-Pūm-Paṭṭinam, from its very foundation, there has been a cemetery in this place. It is surrounded on all four sides by a wall with many gates. There is the enclosure of the goddess Kāḷi. There are many smaller enclosures in which mighty devotees, kings, queens who would not survive their husbands, and others have their memorials inscribed with each one's name, caste, and religion. These are small or great, according to the worth of those to whom they are dedicated. The enclosure contains pillars where sacrifices are offered to the various gods of the cemetery. There are pedestals for memorial stones, there are huts for the watchmen to eat and sleep in ; there are long lines of garlands

and canopied walks ; there are places for burning corpses or simply interring them ; and pits in which bodies may be placed and then walled up or where they may be hidden away in huge coffins. Many and various are the sounds you hear there: the sound of comers and goers, by day and by night. There the funeral drums are heard ; there, the voices of those who are adoring deceased devotees sound out ; there, you hear the wail of those who weep for the dead ; on another side, the jackals are howling ; screech-owls are calling on the dead, the owls of the wilderness utter their complaining cry ; mysterious birds, with human heads, utter sounds of woe ; there, trees of every kind grow around. There are *Vāgai*

trees, the home of demons; there are courts surrounded by *Viḷā* trees, the abode of birds which rejoice to eat the fat and the flesh of the corpses.

There are courts surrounded by *Vanni* trees, where the Kābāligar dwell; there are *Ilanthai* trees surrounding courts where the skulls of those who have died, worn away by ascetic devotions, hang; there, too, are halls where those are found who devour the corpses of the dead.

3

Around are strewed old

fire-pots, withered garlands, and broken vases; grains of rice offered as lesser gifts to the departed lie thick around.

There was enacted the sad tragedy of Sāringalan. He lost his way, and there encountered a demon that was wildly dancing, and fearing it, fled crying aloud. There his mother met him to whom he cried "I have lost my life through a demon I met in the burning-ground," and so saying fell dead at her feet. Forthwith Gotamai rushed forth lamenting loudly and saying "My aged husband and I are blind. We have no other help than our son. But some evil spirit hath devoured his life without a pitying thought of us." So saying, she took up the corpse of her precious son and clasping it to her breast came to the gate in the wall that surrounds the cemetery and said to me "Jambāpatī, thou art the protec- tress of all within these walls, and dost guard them, so that no evil draws near them. But hast thou no sense of justice? henceforth what shall I do?" Thus in her affliction she complained. Jambāpati made answer to her complaint "for what cause hast thou summoned me in this burning ground in the gateway

where demons come and go."

Gotamai told her sad story. Jambāpati replied "no mystic spirit or demon has taken thy son's life; but dire fate as a result of his ignorance hath borne away his soul." To this Gotamai said "take my life and give back his, so shall he take care of his old blind father, I humbly entreat thee." Jambāpati pitying her answered "when the spirit leaves the body, that goes where Karma takes it, and obtains another embodiment. No doubt can be felt about this. To bring back the life that is fled is a thing impossible to me. Therefore lament not for thy dead son". To this Gotamai urged "have I not known by sacred revelation that the gods grant every boon their worshippers ask of them, therefore grant me this, Jambā- pati!"

Jambāpati replied " if any of the gods who visit this sacred enclosure will grant you the boon you ask, I too might grant

it. Let us see if this is possible."
She then summoned up the four classes of formless Brahmas, the sixteen classes of Brahmas possessing forms, the two great lights, the six classes of gods, the numerous host of the Asurar, the eight classes of dwellers in the lower world, the numberless host of the starry heaven, the constellations of the twenty-seven days with Asuvini at their head, and all the other supernatural powers that bestow boons in the Chakra-Vāḷam, and said to them "you see this Gotamai before you, you know her history and the boon she asks, will you restore her dead son and take her life instead of his. ?" With one consent they all replied "the spirits of the dead pass on to other embodiments but reanimate their old froms no more." Gotamai learned this changeless truth, took back to the burning-ground the body of her son, and herself

laid down and died. Such is Gotamai's tragedy. When she had finished her naration, she showed them the whole of the vast en- closure where all the gods assembled with the entire world, and in its midst, Muont Mēru, with its surrounding seven moun- tains, its four great islands, and its two thousand smaller islands, with those that here and there dwelt therein. "This" said she "is called the Chakravāḷa-Kōṭṭam and is called the burning-ground, because that lies close to its walls." Maṇi-Mēkhalai surveyed the home and listened to the story saying at its close "such is the life of men." Then the Fairy-Goddess, by her supernatural power, threw Maṇi-Mēkhalai into a trance and embracing her in her arms, bore her through the air southward for thirty Yojanais to the little island called Maṇi- Pallavam and there set her down.

CHAPTER VII.

It will be seen that the object of the story is to show how the heroine Maṇi-Mēkhalai was taken from the dancing hall where she had been born, and from her mother's associates, and

carried through a variety of experiences, embracing life both natural and supernatural, in every variety, in order to bring her at last to the tranquil Buddhist retreat where she is left on the verge of the blessed consummation of Nirvāṇa.

It is in fact a "Buddhist Pilgrim's Progress". From an evil life to the mystic joys of the Buddhist consummation. This gives the story its peculiar interest. Nowhere else in all literature is the full character displayed of that Buddhism which

strove to absorb South India,—and failed.

The tutelary goddess, Maṇi-Mēkhalai-Deyvam having left Maṇi-Mēkhalai in the island of Maṇi-Pallavam returned and finding out the disappointed Utaya-Kumaran addressed him as follows:

"......................Oh son of the king!
If the king swerve from right, the prosperity of the land will fail, If equity fail, rain will cease to fall.
If rain cease to fall, human life will fail.
Human life is to the king as his own life.
So all things fail when the king fails in virtue.
Sc cease thou the vain pursuit of her who is dedicated to an ascetic life."

Then leaving him, she returned to the Uvavanam, where she had left Sutamati sleeping, and arousing her, said "I, who have been with you disguised, am the tutelary goddess Maṇi-Mēkhalai. I came here to see the feast of Indra; fear not. To Maṇi-Mēkhalai the favouring time has come when she is called to become a disciple of the Buddhist WAY.

Therefore have I taken her away and left her in the islet of Maṇi-Pallavam. There she will be made acquainted with all the events of her former embodied life. On the seventh day from this, she will return hither, and though she will be disguised, you shall be able to recognise her when she returns hither. Many miracles will be wrought; go now to her mother Mātavi and tell her of my arrival and that Maṇi-Mekhalai has entered the Good Way.

I

She knew me of old; her father Kōvalan told her of my name and said 'give to your daughter the name of the tutelary goddess of our clan. She has appeared to me and said thou hast borne a pious daughter and shall utterly extirpate the yearning desires that Kāman brings'. Bring all this to her remembrance".

Accordingly Sutamati arose, and sorrowing for her separation, went around the park and through a little gate in the

western wall reached the Chakravāḷa-Kōṭṭam. There is a caravansary called the "World's Hospice," at the entrance to which there is a pillar with an image in which a divinity resides. To her great astonishment, this image addressed her "Oh daughter sole of

Iravi-Vanman ! Spouse of Tuchchayan the cavalier.

Thou didst give up thy life before the elephant in mortal fear. Oh daughter of Kausigan of Saṉbai of the Kārāḷar! Sutamati who art the Vīrai.

Together with Tārai and Tavvai.
Didst enter this city with Māruta-Vēgan!

Thy younger sister Lakshmi will return to this city in seven dâys having learnt the full history of thy former embodiment and of her own. Fear not because of thy separa- tion from her." This the image uttered with its mystic voice. Sutamati troubled in mind

remained there until the morning dawned, and as soon as the sun arose, she set out, and along the city street, and made her way to Mātavi to whom she told all that had occurred the day before. When she had told her story, Mātavi sorrowed as a serpent that has lost his crest-gem; and Sutamati herself not able to endure the separation of Maṇi-Mekhalai remaind there as one dead.

CHAPTER VIII.

SORROW IN MAṆI-PALLAVAM.

While Sutamati and Mātavi were thus sorrowing, Maṇi- Mekhalai on the shore of the sea that surrounds the Maṇi- Pallavam was sleeping where the tutelary goddess had left her. She awoke from her mystic slumber and like one awaking from death in an unknown

world, she sat up and shudderingly looked around. Meanwhile the sun arose; she cried out "can this be some part of the Uvavanam that I have not seen before. Oh Sutamati! thou hast hidden thyself and caused me this distress; I know not whether I am awake or dreaming still; my soul is distressed; wilt thou not reply; the darkness is gone, my mother Mātavi will be distressed at my absence; Oh jewelled lady, hast thou gone far off; return! Is this some delusion sent by the goddess who appeared among us in woman's form? I tremble to be left here all alone; quickly return to me." And so exclaiming, she went seeking over each sand-hillock and inlet of the sea. Then she thought of her father and thus apostrophised "Oh thou, my sire, who wert wont to wear on thy jewelled girdle the sharp sword; and who

with my mother didst pass to another land,

behold my grief."

While she was in this state she beheld a

Buddhist altar where those that worship may learn the history of their old embodi- ments. For thus is the vision sent by Indra.

CHAPTER IX.

SHE LEARNS BEFORE THE ALTAR THE STORY OF HER FORMER EMBODIMENTS.

When this wonderful sight appeared to her, she was beside herself with extacy, and clasping her adoring hands above her head and weeping tears of rapture, she went round the altar

from the right; bowed down before it, and arising, she beheld the panorama of her former birth, and cried "Oh holy ascetic, thou didst know the truth. On the bank of the river Gāyam, I have discerned the truth of all thou saidst. In

the land of Gāntāram, in the kingdom of Pūruva, in the city of Iḍavayam, there was a king called Attipati whose cousin was Piramadarman. To that king, thou didst give instruction in virtue. In this island of Jambu, seven days from this there will be an earthquake. When it occurs, this city will fall into the abyss that extends four hundred Yojanais, and will utterly perish. Therefore with haste leave thou this city and go to some other; the king caused this to be proclaimed to all his subjects, and they set forth, and on their way came to the bank of the river Gāyam, and there they made their temporary home; there "Oh, Sir, as thou didst say, at the fixed time, the earthquake came and the city Iḍavayam perished. The king and all the others owe thee much love and bowed before thy feet; then thou didst instruct them in the way of salvation. Then the king of the city of Asotaram whose name was Iravivanman had a queen whose name was Amutapati. She had a daughter called Lakshmi. This Lakshmi became the wife of

Irāgulan, who was the child of Nīlapati. I with my husband came to thee to hear instruc- tion in virtue and thou didst say to me "this Irāgulan in sixteen days will die through the bite of a snake called Tiṭṭiviḍam. Thou wilt be burnt with his corpse. Afterwards thou wilt be born in Kāviri-pūmpaṭṭinam ; there thou shalt suffer an affliction. The tutelary goddess Maṇi-Mekhalai shall come and appear to thee, and in the dead of night shall carry thee off and place thee in one of the islands to the South of Kāviri-pūmpaṭṭinam. After this thou shalt see the Buddhist shrine and shalt worship there. As soon as thou hast worshipped, the history of thy past embodiments shall be revealed to thee. Then shalt thou understand the words I have spoken to thee this day." "I asked, how shall my hus- band be born tell me that?" To this it was replied to me "the tutelary goddess shall again appear and make thee understand

all things ". But that goddess has not come. So sobbing and weeping she stood there.

CHAPTER X.

THE MAGIC SPELLS ARE GIVEN.

While Maṇi-Mēkhalai was in this state, her tutelary god-
dess descended and saying "Maṇi-Mêkhalai has learned the
secret of her former embodiment. She is in a blessed state of
mind," and then turning to the shrine, she said so as to be
heard by Maṇi-Mêkhalai.

All living beings on earth had lost spiritual perception,
Their ears were stopped so that they know not

what they heard;

Then upon the desert earth that virtue again might flourish,

In the time when light was dimmed and all was in confusion,

As the morning sun arises with auspicious wings,

Thou didst appear, and at thy feet I worship now.

This shrine is Thee Thyself and so I reverence it.

Above all I place Thee! above the earth

I have exhalted Thee that grief may flee away."

She then in worship circled the shrine and stood worshipping. Maṇi-Mêkhalai drew near and bowing before her, said "By Thy grace divine I have learnt the story of my former embodiment; tell me now in what form my husband Irāgulan is born, and where." To her the goddess replied,

"Lakshmi! listen;

one day in a shady grove, thou hadst a petty quarrel with thy

spouse. He then to make his peace with thee fell at thy feet.

Then Sātu-Chakkaran, a Buddhist devotee, who had been to

the Ratna-Tīvam to spread his faith, came down from the

skies, seeing him trembling, astonished, utterly bewildered thou

didst adore him. Seeing this Irāgulan in anger cried 'who is

this that comes here'? Thou trembling with fear didst close

his mouth and cried 'from the skies this mighty one hath

descended but thou dost not worship the flower

of his feet nor praise him, how great a sin is this!' So saying, with thy hus- band, you bowed at the devotee's feet, while you said 'we are the humble servants of your august person, but though not of your disciples, we implore you to take food and drink water. We are prepared to obey your every injunction.' To this the devotee replied 'mother I will take the food thou bringest'. Thus ye fed him.

"The charitable act by which that day he ate and drank, shall never leave you but shall release you from future birth.

"The Utaya-Kumaran who came to thee in the Uvavanam is that Irāgulan himself. On that account it is, that his mind clings to thee and that thine so much clings to him. To break that clinging bond and bring thee into the good way, I have brought thee to this island and caused thee to see this shrine. Lakshmī! hear, moreover, in that former birth, thy elder sisters were Tārai and Vīrai and were the wives of Tuch-chayan, the king of the city of Kachchayam.

One day these two were wander- ing about admiring the beauty of the mountains, when they came to the banks of the Ganges, and saw there Aṛavaṇavaḍigaḷ and

reverencing him they said 'what divinity are you, and whence have you come?' He replied 'I have come here to visit the

Mountain of the Lotus-Foot. In the ancient time, Buddha, the divine, resolved to free all souls of men from sorrow and fill them with delight, and that all might hear these tidings and rejoice, on that mountain peak he stood and taught the way of virtue. There the print of his feet still remains, therefore it is called the Mountain of the Lotus-Foot. Oh ye of faultless wisdom, come ye to behold and worship'. As he said, they forthwith went and beheld the sacred mountain. Through the merit thus acquired, these two Tārai and Vīrai have been born and are with thee now as Mātavi and Sutamati. Maṇi- Mekhalai! thou knowest now the story of thy former birth,

thou hast learnt the fact of the appearance of Virtue upon earth; hereafter thou shalt hear of the tenets of other

sectaries; but they would say she is only a young maiden, and would not unfold to thee the mystery of their doctrines; therefore, it will be necessary for thee to assume another shape; therefore I will teach thee the Mantras by which thou shalt be able to assume other forms and to pass at pleasure through the aerial regions. But bear ever in mind that it is the virtuous WAY of Buddha, the divine, in which thou art to walk; adore this shrine and depart". As Maṇi- Mêkhalai arose to go, the goddess returned and said "thou art now a hallowed voteress; but those who wear a mortal body have need of food; but I will teach thee one other Mantra yet that shall take away all pangs of hunger."

So saying, she taught her that Mantra and then departed through the heavenly way.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CUP RECEIVED.

After this Maṇi-Mēkhalai took a quiet walk to enjoy the sight of the sand-hills, the flower-gardens, and the cool pleasant lakelets of the island; and while she was doing so a female form appeared and said to her "Who art thou who hast come here alone as one escaped from shipwreck?"

To this Maṇi-Mēkhalai replied "Hear thou who hast asked who I am; in my former birth I bore the name of Lakshmi, I was the wife of the young son of the king. His name was Irāgulan; in my present birth I am the daughter of Mātavi, a dancing girl; I now bear the name of Maṇi-Mēkhalai, the tutelary goddess. Maṇi-Mēkhala brought me to this islet from the Uvavanam which is in the environs of

Kāviri-Pūm-Paṭṭinam. And so at this shrine which I have beheld I have received the knowledge of my former embodiment. This is the gain I have here acquired. But, oh, thou who art like a flowery creeper who art thou?" To this Tīvatilakai (but this was her name)

replied "In former birth I came to this island that I might behold the imprints of the feet of Buddha, the divine, which are to be seen on the mountain of Sāmanta Kūḍam which soars high above this island. From the time I came here by the command of Indra I am in charge of this holy shrine. My name is Tīvatilakai. By the grace of Buddha, the divine, any one who walks in his righteous WAY when they behold this shrine through the excellence of that vision, forthwith obtain the knowledge of all their previous embodiments; this is certain; but few in this world are such, to these alone the path of virtue belongs. Thou art greatly distinguished by having received this mystic conscious knowledge. Hardiby, here is a

sacred lakelet which is called Gomugi where rare lotus flowers abound; in that lake an indestructible cup called Amutasurabi is found. Once in the year on the very day when Buddha, the divine, became incarnate upon earth that cup emerges from the water and becomes visible. This day is the time of the full moon. This is the very moment for its appearance. I think that even now that cup will come into thy hands. Whatever food is put into that cup never diminishes but as you take it out the cup is ever filled. Thou shalt hear the story of it in thy own town from Aṛavaṇavaḍigaḷ." Desirous to obtain this cup Maṇi- Mekhalai adored the altar and with her went forth to the Gomugi lake, and having made the circuit of it stood there. Forthwith from out the lake the cup came forth and in a moment was in Maṇi-Mekhalai's hands. With unutterable gladness she lifted up her voice and sang:

"I bow before thy feet oh hero Māran's conqueror!

I bow before thy feet victor of the fierce hate of evil ways!
I bow before thy feet great one who dost work grace to others!
I bow before thy feet thou ancient one who hast rejected paradise!
I bow before thy feet thou who dost transcend all thought!
I bow before thy feet thou whose eye gladdens each other eye!
I bow before thy feet thou whose ear is deaf to every evil word!
I bow bofore thy feet thou whose tongue is glorious with the word of truth!

I bow before thy feet thou whose tread destroys the sorrow of those
in hell! I bow before thy feet who dost remove the sonows of the Uragar! I can do naught but worship in speechless reverence before thee!"

Thus did she worship Buddha, the divine. Then Tīvatilakai took up the song of the woes of poverty and hunger, and of the greatness of those who relieve them.

"It destroys nobility of birth!
It murders excellence!

It makes naught the great raft of learning that man lays hold of!

It destroys the ornaments of shame and the beauty of greatness!

It puts outside man and his homely spouse!

Those that are driven away the sinner called hunger's woe!

How can I attain to the measure of their glorious fame!" "Once on a time Kausiga the sage, because rain fell not, was afflicted with hunger. To satisfy the craving he wandered far and wide but found no food and so wasted away till the carcase of a dog fell into his hands. This he began to eat but first a portion of the flesh he offered in sacrifice to the gods, and Indra forthwith sent rain, and the crops flourished once more and all living beings were glad. This thou knowest

"Who give to the needy, tell forth the praise of virtue,

Who alleviate the hunger-pains of needy men they

Give to those who dwell in the world above delight

And to those who live in this world of clay.
To living creatures who give food give life."

Therefore relieving hunger and giving life shall be the virtues to which thou shalt dedicate thyself." Thus she spake. Maṇi- Mēkalai replied "In my former birth when my husband Irāgulan died from the bite of a snake, I could not endure but threw myself into the fire; when I was burning I remembered that I had given food to the Sage Sātusakkaran. Through the merit of entertaining that thought when I was dying this cup has now come into my hands. So I deem. And now as a mother feels compassion when she sees the faded face of her hungry

infant and gives it milk from her breast; so I beholding the faces of the poor who wander hither and thither regardless of scorching sun and pelting rain will have compassion on them, will from this cup more and more pour forth the food of life." Tivatilakai hearing her thus speak rejoiced and said "Forthwith take this cup and set out for thy home." Maṇi-Mēkhalai accordingly worshipped at her feet, went round the shrine in adoration and then pronouncing the magic words that carried her through the air, she arose and going through the aerial path she presented herself before Sutamati and Mātavi, and astonished them by telling them the mystery of their former embodiments and told them that they must go to Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ to learn the ascetic way which is the reward of human embodiment.

She also showed them Āputran's magic-cup and made them pay homage to it. They then together sought the dwelling of the Sage.

CHAPTER XII.

THE VISIT TO ARAVAṆA-ADIGAL,

Maṇi-Mêkhalai found her way to the old Sage.

"Grey and old in body, with unfaltering tongue
The aged Sage's home she gained."

Three times she bowed before him and then told him how she
had gone to the Uvavanam, how she had seen Utaya-Kumaran
and spoken with him, how afterwards the tutelary goddess
Maṇi-Mêkhalai had carried her off to the Maṇi-Pallavam, how
in that island she had seen the shrine of Buddha and had

learnt the history of her former embodiment. She moreover said "Irāgulan who in former embodiment was your husband has now been born as Utaya-Kumaran. Your elder sister Tārai and Vīrai have now been born as Mātavi and Sutamati. From Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ thou shalt learn all their histories."

So said Maṇi-Mêkhalai, the goddess, to me and taught me three magic spells. Then Tīvatilakai took me to the Gōmukhi lake where I obtained the magic cup called Amutasurabi and told me to learn from you the history of Āputran. So I have accordingly sought your feet. The sage heard all this with joy and said "Once on a time I went to the Lotus-Foot-Hill, and returning in a thicket on the way I saw king Tuchchayan. I asked him of his health and he troubled in mind replied in broken words, that Vīrai intoxicated had perished before the wild elephant, and that Tārai hearing this had climbed and thrown herself down from the palace roof". I said to him "This is the fruit of the old

deeds, grieve thou not, and now ye have reappeared as Mātavi and Sutamati, the dancing women". Then to Maṇi-Mêkhalai he said "In this world the Buddhist virtues have decayed and sins have multiplied; but little by little virtue may again flourish, and so thinking I continue to teach that virtuous way. The men of this world know not that virtue, threfore at the request of the gods who dwell in this Chakravāḷam in the one thousand, six hundred and sixteenth year the god who inhabits the Tushita-world will be incarnate in this world. After that the minds will turn to virtue's grace."

"When the sun of Buddha shall appear
The sun and moon shall appear free from evil;
The unstaying constellations will move on as befits;
The rain will unfailing fall and the vast earth yield her increase.
Embodied souls shall then no sorrow see,

The cool sea shall yield many blessings,
The milch cows shall fill the pails with milk,
The birds shall flock in plenty round
the abodes of men,
Strife between beasts and men
Demons from the abyss that bring dismay shall
depart,
No maimed or blind or dumb or deaf
Shall living beings produce.
Those that hear the gracious virtue of Him born that day
Shall escape this evil birth and so
The illustrious Lord who sits at the feet
of the Bodi-tree

Shall I worship at His feet and faults shall be no
more,
In every birth I fail not to sing his praise."

This being so, Mani-Mekhalai, in this city
some duties await thee when thou hast

performed them, and not before, my words of virtue can lay hold of thy mind. These two in their former birth on the Lotus-Foot-Hill did worship, and for the merit so acquired in the aftertime with thee shall they worship at the sacred feet of Buddha and freed from all Karma shall obtain Nirvāṇa. Thou hast obtained the sacred cup—the Amutasurabi. Go and satisfy the hunger of all living beings.

" Hear thou the virtuous word agreed on by all
Both men on earth and gods above
Heal the disease of hunger so have they taught
Consummated lore of all ascetic piety."

"Thus will I do", said Maṇi-Mekhalai.

CHAPTER XIII.

ĀPUTRAN'S HISTORY.

After this Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ said to Maṇi-Mekhalaḷ "I will now tell you the whole history of Āputran. In Vāraṇāsi

(Benares) there was a Brahmin, a teacher of the Vēdas whose name was Apañjigan whose wife Sāli had fallen into sin to expiate which she went on a pilgrimage to the Southern river Kanyā-Kumari to bathe in the sacred stream.

She was pregnant, and on the way she brought forth an infant which without compassion she left in a field and went on her way. The child left without sustenance cried loudly and a cow hearing the infant's cry came to its relief licking it with its tongue, and supplying it with milk for seven days, it thus performed its charitable work.

At that time in the town of Vayanankōḍu there was a Brahmin whose name was Būti, and he with his wife happening to pass that way and hearing the infant's wail drew near to it, and shedding many tears over its sufferings the Brahmin cried out

'This is no cow's son, he is my own son", and

taking him up went home to his house with joy. There he brought him up and in due time taught him all the learning necessary to those of his clan. One day the boy entering by chance the house of a Brahmin in the town saw there a cow in the court of sacrifice adorned with the garland twined round its horns and complain- ing as it anticipated its fate. The child wept over it and exclaimed 'This night I will go unknown to them and release the cow.' So at nightfall he came from the jungle where he had been hiding and leading the cow forth went back to the forest. Next day the Brahmins missed the cow and assembling together went in search of it, and finding the cow and the little boy who had stolen it away, and seizing them cried out 'You wretch why didst thou in the night steal this cow",' and beating him with a stick, they began to torture him. Forth- with the cow rushed at the Brahmin, and

goring him with its horns made its escape into the wilderness. Āputran said to them "Don't be distressed, only listen to my words. What fault hath this cow committed that you should torture it?

"What fault find ye with this cow
It grazes in the uncultivated fields
It gives milk to the children in the wide land
From the day of its birth it gives sweet milk
With charitable heart it dispenses grace to all."

They replied "Art thou ignorant of the Vēdic law? Dost thou despise the mystic sacrifice? Fittingly thou bearest the name of "Son of the cow". To this he rejoined, "A cow's son was Asalan;

The son of an antilope was Sirungi;
A tiger's son was Viriñji; A jackal's son was Kēšakambaḷan
Whom the blameless praise, he whom the host of Rishis praise
And declare his lofty glory. Can then the clan
Decay that springs from the cow's sacred son?"

Hearing this one of the Brahmins said "I know this boy's whole history which till now I have seen no reason to divulge. One day a Brahmin woman called Sali having bathed in the sacred

waters of Kanyākumari was in deep distress. I said to her whence comest thou and wherefore hither hast thou come? She replied 'I am the wife of a teacher of the Vedas in the city of Vāraṇāsi. To atone for my sin I left my husband and have come here to bathe in the Kanyākumari. Ten miles on the other side of Korkai in a shepherd's village I bore an infant and without compassion I left it in the garden there. Can there be any salvation for a sinner like me?' And so she wept bitterly. This is the son that mother bore. He is impure; touch him not but drive away." To this Āputran answered "have you not heard Tilottamai's sons who became great Sages? You heap abuse forsooth on Sāli's name" (Sāli was one of the names of the famed Aruṇtati). Būti who had brought the boy up now disowned him and cast him out as impure. All around he bore the name of the thief who stole

stones instead of rice into his cup.
the cow, and so they put
Having thus no recourse
he fled to the great Southern city of Madura;

and in the Hall
of learning belonging to the temple of Chinta-Devi (Sarasvati) he dwelt in an ancient Court and carrying in his hand an alms-bowl from house to house he ever went and collected food, and then

"The blind, the deaf, the lame
Those who had none to care for them
Those tortured by disease,—come all to me",
So he cried and fed all.

Then on the fragments that remained he fed, slept with the alms-bowl under his head, and so he spent his nights and days.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE STORY OF THE CUP.

The Sage went on to say "I will now tell you of what befell Āputran. One night while he was sleeping, there came to him some travellers, who arousing him cried out "We are dying of

hunger". Now as his alms-bowl was empty he could afford them no help. In that emergency Chiṇtā-Dêvi appeared to him, and giving into his hand a cup which he said "though the whole country were destitute of food this cup shall never be empty; the more you give the more shall it yield". Immediately he sprang up, his heart thrilled with gladness and he sang.

"Oh Thou the inextinguishable Lamp
Of the Shrine of Chiṇtā-Dêvi filled with lore!
Oh Queen of the heavenly Ones! Supreme' midst earthly Ones!
Thou wilt remove the pain that all others endure,"

"Thus he praised and worsipped her,

and giving the travellers the food they required, from that day forth he satisfied the wants of all who came to him. Beasts and birds lovingly surrounded him and never quitted the spot. But now one day Iṇdra knowing by the trembling of his white couch, the rare virtue of the youth, and desiring to give him some further boon assumed the form of an aged Brahmin, and said "I am Iṇdra, I have come to bestow a boon on thee; what wilt thou have? Thou shalt receive the fruit of thy boundless charity." Aputran laughed till his sides were sore and replied "Oh mighty Divinity, Lord of those who dwell in the land of the Gods where none do works of charity, none are that cherish others, where none perform

acts of penance,
where none live shaking off earthly bonds! Sufficient for me is the cup from which I draw supplies for every need and remedies for every ill. There is nothing else for me to desire".
When he thus made light of Indra's gracious offer the god was angry and said "I will deprive thee of thy retinue of needy suppliants; and send everywhere abundant rains". So, abundance filled the world. Āputran was thus forsaken by his clients. He then left the Court in which wayfarers were wont to congregate and went forth into the surrounding towns and hamlets crying "Are there any that need be fed?" But want was nowhere and so they passed him by with contempt, and he became

desolate as one who had lost his wealth, being left alone. He then saw some persons who

landed from a ship on the island and who told him that in the land of Sāvagam there was a famine from which vast multitudes had died.

" Hearing this he said " I will hasten to their relief" and forthwith embarked in the ship. That ship came near to Maṇi-Pallavam where it remained a day. There he went on shore; but the captain unaware of this sailed away without him. Thus left alone on an island with the cup which feeds multitudes he reflected as he adored the cup and said to it "One day in every year thou shalt appear, and threw it into the Gomukhi sacred lake, and himself fasting lay down to die. Then, I who had gone to that island beheld him and asked him what grief had overtaken him. He told me the whole history and dying left his body in Maṇi-Pallavam, while himself was reincarnated in the body of the cow of the king of Sāvagam whither he had gone to save the lives of the famine stricken people".

CHAPTER XV.

THE ASKING ALMS WITH THE CUP.

The Sage went on to say "Hear the rest of the story, oh Maṇi-Mekhalai. The cow which before had for seven days given milk to the infant Āputran as the reward of that virtue in the Sāvagam land on the white mountain under the protect- ion of Sage called Maṇmugan who was performing penance there, possessed of golden horns and hoofs, even before it brought forth gave milk and supplied the wants of all the living creatures. The sage seeing that and having mystic knowledge of present, past, and future, proclaimed 'From this cow, from a golden egg a wonderful personage shall appear, who shall save the lives of all'. So Āputran who had died in Maṇi-Pallavam in his charitable work now remembering what in his infancy that cow had done for him now appeared

according to the Sage's utterance as its offspring. The time of his appearance was the full moon of Vaisāgam. Many good omens then appeared. Accordingly the Sages in the Chakra-vāḷa-Kōṭṭam said "These are the omens which appear when Buddha should be incarnated, what is the cause of this?" So in wonder they went to the Deity in the pillar to ask her to solve the mystery. She told them "A wonderful personage who died in Maṇi-Pallavam has now been born in the Sāvaga-land in order to save the lives of men. That is the cause of these favourable omens. Learn the history from Aṟavaṇam". So she sent them to me, and my tongue was weary

with the telling.

The king of that city whose name was Bhūmi-Chandran was in great affliction because he had no son and bowing down before the Sage Maṇmugan he asked of him the infant born of the cow, and taking it brought it up as his own. That child having now obtained the kingly dignity is living there. Let this be so. Though there is no fall in the flow of the waters of the Kāviri, though the land is fertile, still the famine is prevailing here; I am unable to know its cause. So, it is not fitting that this magic Cup capable of such benefits should remain idle.

"The food which the white waters give
The heavenly ones
Enjoy, and what remains they give to men."

Maṇi-Mēkhalai having heard this forthwith

praised and adored him, and arraying herself in the garb of a mendicant took up the cup and went forth into the street. When she did so the king of the city of Ujjayini whose name was Prachōtanan having deceived Utayanan had imprisoned him, and when he released him his minister Yaugañta-rāyanan having assumed another form, and having reached the street at the same time beholding him with sorrow and beholding Maṇi-Mêkhalai in the form of a beggar exclaimed "How wonderful this is that she who dwells in the soul of Utaya-Kumaran should here in the public street be begging?" And in sorrow they all came round. Then Maṇi-Mêkhalai said "It is befitting to receive alms first of all from

virtuous matrons." To this Kāyasaṇḍigai said this is the house of Ātirai renowned as the chaste matron whose virtue brings the rain; enter here.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HISTORY OF SĀTUVAN AND ĀTIRAI.

Kāyasaṇḍigai went on to say to
Maṇi-Mēkhalai "Listen to
the interesting story of Ātirai's virtues.
Her husband's name
is Sātuvan, who got intangled by the wiles
of a courtesan so
that he spent all his property in riotous
living, and resolved
to take a voyage to some other land to recruit

his fortunes; but on the way a violent gale submerged the ship. Sātuvan however laid hold of a broken spar and was borne to the shore where dwelt a naked race of savages; the rest of the passengers escaped and returned to Kāvirip-Pūm-Paṭṭinam where they brought the report that Sātuvan was drowned. When she heard the sad tidings she was overwhelmed with sorrow and resolved to put an end to her life. So in the burning ground she caused a pit to be dug, firewood to be heaped up and fire kindled. 'Then through adverse fate my husband is dead and whither he has gone I will follow him.' So saying she entered the fire. But the fire refused to burn her, and she exclained 'the fire will not burn a sinner as I am; whither can I return?' But a voice from the sky was heard to say 'Ātirai

! thy husband is not dead, he is now on the Nāgar Mountain, he will not long remain there; but return in the ship of a merchant whose name is Chandradattan. Put away thy grief!" Hearing this voice Ātirai was comforted, returned to her home, and in gratitude for the hope of her husband's speedy return gave herself up to the unceasing performance of meritorious works of charity.

"Meanwhile Sātuvan having reached the Nāgar Mountains lay down to rest under the shadow of a tree and being weary

fell asleep. The savages who inhabited the mountain seeing him lie there said 'Here is a hearty meal for us' and aroused him from his slumber. But he had learnt their language so as to speak intelligibly to them, so they ceased to trouble him but said we have a priest of our tribe; come with us to him.

So he went with them; terrible was the scene he beheld!

"Pots in which Toddy was boiled, the stench of carrion food, bones
whitening in the sun,
And in the midst like a bear with his mate, he saw the priest and
his spouse."

When he saw the priest he began to talk to him and soon became intimate. And so he called to his men and said 'This man is hungry and weary, give him toddy and flesh to his heart's content, and my younger daughter for his spouse.' Sātuvan hearing this and distressed at his folly cried out 'I need none of these.' The priest in anger replied 'What other things are there to give delight to men than women and food? If there be ought else ask for it.' Sātuvan replied

'Lust and drunkenness and murder
Are sternly forbidden by righteous men!

Those who are born must die; the dead again must be born;
Like sleeping and waking from sleep are death and life;
Who do deeds of fitting virtue obtain the blessed one;
Who do deeds of vice descend to hell;
Those who know these truths abandon all.'

"He then proceeded to give fitting answers to the priest's questions, told him of re-embodiment, of virtue and sin, and of the joys and sorrows that flow from these; and fully instructed him in all the details of a holy virtuous life. When he took his leave they gave him sandal-wood, Agil, and other things which he received, and embarking in the ship of the merchant Chandra-dattan he came back to this city and offering many gifts he now lives happily with his wife. Therefore by the hand of

Ātirai shall the first alms be put into your cup." So Maṇi-
Mēkhalai entered the dwelling and stood picture. And then

there silently like a

Worshipping, reverently pacing round, with words
That banish grief, she filled the magic Cup with luscious food;
And then 'Through all the world banish hunger and disease', so said Ātirai and gave the sacred food.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ENTRANCE INTO THE CITY CHOULTRY.

When Mani-Mēkhalai had received the alms given by Ātirai she proceeded to distribute the food, but as she took it out it did not diminish but increased more and more till the hunger of all that came sandigai wondered and was satisfied. Seeing this Kāya- prostrating herself before Mani-Mēkhalai she cried "Oh mother relieve my insatiable hunger too". Forthwith Mani-Mēkhalai gave her a handful of food from out the Cup, which as soon as she had eaten, her disease of ravenning hunger was cured and with joy she said: "My town is Kāñjana-Puram in the land of the fairies, far in the North. I and my husband set out to see the glories of the Poti Mountains in the South, and in our way we found ourselves on the banks of the river in the midst of a forest. There a Sage whose name was Viruchchigan had put in a leaf of a teak tree a Nāval fruit of the size of a Palmyra fruit for

his food while reciting the Vēda, and had then gone to bathe. I, not knowing that this fruit was the Sage's food, went and through the effect now matured of my deeds done in a former birth, trod upon and crushed the fruit. The sage having bathed returned and seeing the fruit thus destroyed by my foot, was wrath and said 'This is the fruit of the Nāval-tree of divine growth which yields but a single fruit once in twelve years. They who

eat it for twelve years know not the pangs of hunger. I am one whose penance is that he eats but once in twelve years and fasts the remainder of the time. This is my day for eating, and this the fruit I was to have eaten. This thou hast destroy- ed; therefore thou shalt forget the magic spell that enables thee to pass

through the aerial way and for twelve years thou shalt suffer from the quenchless hunger which is called "The Elephant Fire". After that thou shalt return on the day when I eat, and not till then shall thy hunger be appeased'. Saying this he departed. And I suffered unutterable pangs. My husband brought me exquisit fruits and roots and other eatables in abundance and fed me but the hunger was not appeased. I had forgotten too the spell by which I passed through the sky. Then my husband seeing this said with sorrow, 'Go on, and in this Tamil-land many wealthy persons dwell who render assistance to those who have no refuge. They dwell in the city of Kāvirip-Pūm-Paṭṭinam, there shalt thou remain'. And thus I am here every year at the feast of Indra my husband comes, beholds my sorrow, with compassion weeps, and again departs.

Thou hast removed this craving hunger that knew no remedy,
I adore Thee, Maṇi-Mekhalai! and return to my heavenly home.

In this city there is a pleasure-ground called the Chakra-vāḷak-Kōṭṭam where many sacred Sages dwell. There, there is a court whose door is always opened wide, through which multitudes enter, and it is called "The world's Caravansary". There are

Those that suffer from gnawing hunger in every town;
There are those who suffer from disease and none to aid;
There are many who seek for those that give.

"Therefore thither shalt thou go." So she departed, and Maṇi-Mekhalai passing unobserved along the street came to the world's Caravansary, went round it three times adoring, then entered it and worshipping Sambāpati and the Genius in the pillar,

Like the abundant rain which appears upon the wild
Where the fierce sunlight glows and the Bamboo grows black.
For afflicted men whom cruel hunger devours
: :
The jewelled maiden with her unfailing chalice appeared,

and cried aloud "This vessel is the food-outpourer that was in Āputran's hand". Many came and were fed, and the sound ever arose of those that ate in the hallowed court.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UTAYA-KUMARAN COMES TO THE CHOULTRY.

Sittirāpati having heard that Maṇi-Mekhalai as a beggar-girl bearing in her hands the alms-bowl, had gone into the worlds Choultry, was very much disturbed in mind and sighing deeply thought within herself "I will take her away from this occupation"; and so calling together the whole company of the dancing women she said "After the death of Kōvalan, Mātavi has abandoned everything and going to the ascetics' monastery, she has assumed the garb of a devotee. This is absolutely ridiculous; we dancing girls are not devout women who die with their lords. When the songster dies his lute remains. Moreover we are like the bee that sucks fragrant juice of the flower, and leaves it when there is no more good in it. So are we to assume the garb of an ascetic, does not harmonise at all with our method of life. I shall change the ascetic disguise of Mātavi's daughter Maṇi-Mekhalai, and take from her the alms-bowl. I will also inform Utaya-Kumaran who for many days has desired her society, and I will bring her back mounted on his chariot. If I fail to do this may I walk round our dancing hall, bearing on my head the seven bricks that indicate the guilty one, and like one who is disgraced may I never again enter the hall of the dancing women." Having thus made her vow she went surrounded by a great multitude to the kings palace, and having respectfully saluted him she

informed him in a-round-about-way that Maṇi-Mêkhalai was in the Choultry. He related the story of his meeting with Maṇi- Mêkhalai in the Uvavanam, and everything connected with it.

Sittirāpati set herself to change his mind and succeeded so far that he mounted his chariot, rode off to the world's Choultry and seeing Maṇi-Mêkhalai feeding the multitude drew near to her and said " Why hast thou assumed this ascetic garb? " Maṇi- Mêkhalai remembering that he in a former birth had been her husband bowed submissively before him and sang

" This mortal frame is a vessel of disgrace.
It is born, it grows old, it suffers from disease,
It implores help, and dies. This I know
And so I have given myself up to the eager desire of a charitable

life."

She then resolving to assume a new form quitted him, went into the temple and bowing before Sambāpati repeated the spell by which she could change her form and assuming the appearance of Kāyasaṇḍigai she came forth with the magic cup in her hand. Utaya-Kumaran thinking that she had handed over her cup to Kāyasaṇḍigai and hidden hereself in the temple said to the goddess "How am I to find her amidst so great a crowd, if thou wilt not discover her to me? Here will I as a suppliant abide, however many days may pass. I will not depart hence and leave her here". So touching the goddess's feet he swore.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PRISON TURNED INTO AN ALMS-HOUSE.

Utaya-Kumaran had no sooner uttered this vow than he heard a mysterious sound proceeding from one of the statues into which a goddess had entered, which said "Thou hast made

without due consideration a solemn vow before our mistress the goddess. Thy vow is utterly invalid".

Having heard this

Utaya-Kumáran began to tell him of the transitory nature of earthly joys. When she thus discoursed to him Kāñjanan said to himself "This my wife has abandoned me and attached herself to the young prince". Filled with jealousy and anger like a snake that has entered an ant-hole, he went into the Choultry with hostile mind, and there conceiled himself. The young prince knowing nothing of this and filled with desire said "This is Maṇi-Mêkhalai herself, she has assumed the form of Kāyasaṇḍigai in order to be a stranger to

me; I shall come here to night and find out the secret of her and of this man who has attached himself to her". So he went home, while Maṇi-Mekhalai still disguised went to the temple of Sambāpati where she lodged. So when all were asleep Utaya-Kumaran as he had planned ventured forth and leaving the palace went unattended to the Choultry, and entered it. As soon as he had done so, Kāñjanan said "He has come as I thought" and arising in haste cut him down with his sword, and drew near to carry away her that bore the form of Kāyasaṇḍigai. Immediately from the pillar-god a voice was heard "Oh Kāñjanan come not near, come not near, this is not thy wife. She who wears that form is Maṇi-Mēkhalai who relieved her of

her hunger-pain.

Your wife when cured went along the heavenly way and I will tell thee what she suffered as she went. There is a mountain called Vindhya which is the abode of Kāḷi and those who pass through the air are forbidden to approach it. It is guarded by a deity called Vindhā-Kaḍigai who draws the trespassers by her shadow and swallows them alive. Kāyasandigai unaware of this, approached the mountain and is thus entombed. Hear this moreover; Utaya-Kumaran has indeed perished by the decree of fate; but thou didst not examine well, and in ignorance hast committed a great crime, the effect of which will pursue and torment thee". Hearing this Kāñjanan went away in sorrow to his city.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SPIRIT IN THE PILLAR TELLS HIS HISTORY.

Maṇi-Mêkhalai who was in the temple had heard the whole affair of Kāñjanan, and had witnessed the death of Utaya-Kumaran, and now forthwith she reassumed her proper form, and said aphostrophising the deceased "In our former birth when by the bite of a snake, I could not bear the sorrow of thy death and rushing into the fire I too gave up my life; seeing thee again the old affection revived, and therefore the tutelary goddess Maṇi-Mēkhalai took me away to the Maṇi-Pallavam, and at the shrine of Buddha showed me the vision of my former birth. Therefore, it was, that feeling of the old love, I

taught the words of wisdom. But now alas! thou hast fallen by the hand of the fairy Sage. Alas!" So saying she was about to draw near the corpse when the voice of the spirit in the pillar was heard: "Not only in the last birth wert thou his wife. It was so before in many births:

To thee he appeared as a husband;
And thou to him didst appear as a wife dear to his soul
In days before, in days before, through many a birth this happened,
Oh woman this is not a matter of a single birth.

Thou hast obtained the knowledge that strives for release from the sorrows of this troublous manifold embodiment. Grieve not at his death." Hearing this Maṇi-Mekhalai exclaimed "They tell me that in this court there is a power divine which asserts truth to all. Art thou that divinity? I worship at thy feet. Dost thou know the cause of his death? Then by the viper's sting, and now by the fairy's sword? If so to me your humble slave vouchsafe to make all known". To this the spirit replied "Thou and Irāgulan didst go forth to give food for the Sages who announced that the divine Buddha should appear. This was on the banks of the river of Gāyam. They consented to become your guest and you cried out to the cook 'Early in the morning prepare thou in haste a fitting feast.' He for.

some unknown reason came not at the time appointed, but delayed, and then through fear he stumbled and fell so that the dish of food was spilt. Irāgulan seeing this in pitiless anger exclaimed 'He has delayed to do what he was ordered for the holy sages,' and in anger struck his head from his shoulders. For that murder in that embodiment he died by the serpent's poison; and for the same reason in this birth he here fell slain. This is the cause of Utaya-Kumaran's two deaths. Certain it is that fate never passes by without pouring forth in fitting fruits. And now hear further: The ascetics in this Chakravāḷa-Koṭṭam will tell all this to the king, who will put thee in prison. Aṛavaṇa at the instigation of Mātavi will cause thy release. Other adventures thou shalt have, now hear my history. I am one of the host of the gods, my name is Tuvatigan. In this fitting shrine of an ancient pillar made by the architect Mayan I ever abide." After this Maṇi-Mēkhalai obtained from the spirit a revelation of all her subsequent history promising her Nirvāṇa at the last. She concluded with these words "The ancestors of your clan were good and charitable. One of them conspicuous for charity and virtue, caused Maṇi-Mēkhala to come forth from the sea. In a former birth thou didst assist with virtuous aid

the sage Sātu-Chakkaran. That good deed caused thee to come from the Uvavanam to the Maṇi-Pallavam and the Buddhist shrine." Hearing all this Maṇi-Mekhalai dismissed her cares and her mind was relieved. The sun then rose.

CHAPTER XXII..

THE IMPRISONMENT.

As soon as the sun had arisen, those who came to worship the goddess of the temple and the divinity in the pillar, finding the prince lying there slain, went and informed the Sages in the Chakra-Vāḷa-Kōṭṭam; and they demanded of Maṇi-Mekhalai

if she knew ought of his death. She related to them all that had passed, whereupon they put the corpse and Maṇi-Mekhalai under separate guards and went to inform the king as he sat in state in his audience-chamber. The case was clear. The prince

had been caught and slain in an amorous intrigue. This they represented to the king and comforted him by telling him of other princes* of his own royal line who had sinned and suffered in a similar way.

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*These ascetic Sages relate to the king two stories of kings' children who had been punished for licentiousness. Of these the first is, "The History of Kagaṇdan's son".

This is as follows: in times by-gone, Parasu-Rāman (an incarnation of Vishṇu), came to the South with the intention of destroying all the kings that ruled there. But Durgā warned the king whose name was Kāṇdan not to fight with him, but flee to some other city. He accordingly gave up the city to one of his warriors called Kagaṇdan saying to him "Parasu-Rāman has sworn hostility to none but kings. He will not war with thee. Gaurd the city till at the command of the Sage Augustya I return. Since thou art his guardian the city shall bear the name of Kāgaṇti." Saying this he departed. Kagaṇdan, was thus installed, had two

sons of whom the younger seeing one day a Brahmin women whose name was Marudi bathing at the mouth of the Kāviri, was enamoured of her and called her to come to him. She fled confounded saying to herself "Modest women at whose command rain falls, enter not into the minds of others. But my image has entered his soul. Therefore henceforth I am unworthy to light the Brahman's three-fold household fires. What can be the cause of this?" So with sorrow she turned away from her own door and entered the Demon Square exclaiming "Oh God I have done no fault against my husband; but my image has found easy access into another's mind; tell me of what fault this is the punishment. They say that it is thy office to tie with cords those that fail in their ascetic duties, and all other wicked persons. If thou dost not so bind me, is it because thou findest no fault in me?" To her thus piteously exclaiming, the "Demon of the Square" appeared and said "Oh innocent soul give ear!

"Ponder well the weighty saying of the truthful bard
She worships not the gods, but to her husband renders homage due,
So when she bids it rain, the rain shall fall;"

After hearing all that the Sages had to say, the king

calmly called one of his chief courtiers and said "Utaya-Kumaran whom I ought to have slain myself has been killed by

"But thou hast listened to false tales; to words that stir laughter,

delighting in festivals where there is dancing with music and singing and hast surrendered thyself to the glamour of temple-worship; and thus at thy command, no cloud pours down its rain, and thou hast lost the power that inflames others' hearts which all excellent chaste women possess. If thou wilt abandon these things I tell thee of, the cloud will listen to thy voice and pour forth its rain. I will not bind thee as I bind the women who follow their own hearts' imaginings. The king punishes in seven days those who have committed crimes; if within that time he does not punish, I shall do my duty." As the demon had said, within seven days that erring prince fell by his father's sword.

The second story told by these ascetics was "The history of the generous Merchant Dharma-Dattan." This merchant had a cousin whose name was Visākhai. The two were much in love with one another and often held pleasant converse together. People of the town seeing this began to spread slanderous tales about them and said we shall have a Gāndarva wedding here. Visākhai hearing this fled to the world's "Choultry" and said to the pillar-deity "I pray thee cause this scandal to cease." Accordingly, the pillar-deity uttered aloud with its divine voice the words "Oh dwellers in the town, she is utterly faultless". Hearing this the town-folks wondered and applauded her. But Visākhai said to herself if this divinity had not cleared up the mystery these people would never have ceased to doubt me. In a future birth I will become my cousins wife; but in this birth I cannot wed him. Saying this to her mother, she went into a nunnery and led an ascetic life. After this Dharma-Dattan offering greatful praises to the pillar divinity, left Kāviri-Pūmpaṭṭinam and settled in Maḍura, vowing that he would never marry since Visākhai was unobtainable. In Madura as a virtuous merchant he amassed a great fortune, attained the distinction of the "Margosa-Flower" and lived as a distinguished citizen till his sixtieth year. Then a Brahman came to him and said "Why dost thou live unmarried in this city? Hast thou not heard that the man without a wife can never reach the world of the gods whatever charitable works he may perform. Hasten home to thy city and get thee a wife." Accordingly Dharma-Dattan left Madura and came home to this city, Visākhai hearing of his

arrival, without any hesitation quitted her nunnery and coming to him said "We know one another no more; where is the beauty that distracted us
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that stranger who, since he slew him without inquiry, has committed a grievous sin. But,

The ascetic duties of renouncing Sages, and woman's chastity.

Cannot exist if kings guard not as them befits;

So saying he decreed that his son's body should be thrown into the earth with the wheel of chariot upon it, in order that all other kings might take warning, and know that one unworthy had been born in his royal line. He also commanded that the songstress Mani-Mekhalai should be thrown into prison.

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then. Thou art sixty years old and my once-shining tresses are grey. In this birth, for us, youth and love are no more. In another birth that I shall be thy spouse is certain:

"Youth endures not; the body endures not;
Stores of rich accumulated wealth endure not.

The world of the gods and children are not

Abounding virtue alone shall be ours.

Therefore on all sides bestow thy gifts."

Accordingly he showed her all his wealth and together they employed it in works of charity. Meanwhile, she was going in the street, the elder brother of him who had been slain on account of Marudi beheld her, and becoming enamoured of her, raised his hand to take the garland from his own head intending to throw it upon her; but owing to her supernatural virtue the upraised hand was caught in the tufts of his hair and could not be disentangled. The news of this prodigy was carried to the king Kāṇdan, the father of the offending prince, and he in wroth slew his son. The king replied to these sayings of the sages "So far you have told me of vices of the olden time, but in our own days are there any such evils?" To this the Sages replied,

"Those who know the perfect truth in this whole world.
Declare that five things all men must abduce.
Toddy, and lies, and theft, and murder
And unrestrained lust,
Those that have abduced the last are free from the other four,
But those that are not free from lust are slaves of all, nor is their penance true.
Oh King of this wide earth, they fall
To tortures unbearable in hell."

After this the sages told him the sad story of his son's death.

CHAPTER XXIII.

After this by the kings command an old woman called Vāsaṇtavai who was a confidential friend of all, in the king's Harem, was sent for and administered consolation in her way to the queen. After her departure the queen concealing her grief at the loss of her son resolved in her mind that she would by deceit bring about Maṇi-Mêkhalai's destruction, and accordingly said to the king "Mighty Monarch, Utaya-Kumaran who was infatuated by the beggar-girl Maṇi-Mêkhalai was unworthy of the throne. It was befitting that he should meet with such a death. But Maṇi-Mêkhalai does not deserve imprisonment." The king replied "If that is your opinion let her be released." The queen then took Mṇi-Mêkhalai, into the palace and gave her a medicine which was to have the effect of destroying her reason, so that, the people of the town might torment her as a mad-woman. But as Maṇi-Mêkhalai had received supernatural knowledge of embodiments to come, was entirely unaffected by the maddening poison. The queen next bribed a wretched youth to enter Maṇi-Mêkhalai's chamber and disgrace her. But Maṇi-Mêkhalai aware of the wicked

intention repeated a magic spell by which her form was changed into that of a man, and the youth seeing as he supposed a man in the woman's appartments, into which no male could be admitted feared some great disaster and at once fled away. The queen then said "I will not suffer the girl to live who has caused my son's infatuation and death". So she cast her into a dark dungeon. But Maṇi-Mēkhalai repeated the spell by which she was able to live entirely without sustenence and so remained unaffected by her imprisoment. The queen was now subdued and falling at Maṇi-Mēkhalai's feet with many tears exclaimed "Forgive a mother who suffers anguish because of the loss of her son." Maṇi-Mēkhalai replied "In my last birth when Irāgulan, my husband, whose mother was Nīlapati, died

by the bite of a serpent, I in despair threw myself into the flames. Then:

" Why weepest thou for the young prince?
Oh damsel as a flowerlet sweet, this befits thee not.

Is it for the body thou dost weep or for the soul.

If for the body who bore it forth.
And left it in the burning ground?
If for the soul hard is it to discern.
The home which deeds performed, hath gained for it.
'Tis for the soul thou weepest but I ween
That every living soul deserves thy tear"

The Vidyādaran has slain thy son. I will tell thee for what evil deed he slew him. In a former birth the cook threw down the food, and your son therefore slew him. For that deed, in that birth, the serpent stung him and in this birth the Viñjayan's sword. She then related to the queen her previous history and concluded with these words "all these evils thou hast done to me; but in a former birth thou wert my husband's mother, and therefore to bring thee to the knowledge of the truth, I have stayed here, though by magic spells I could easily have escaped away. Hear thou the things that bring sufferings to men are five, lust, murder, drunkenness, falsehood and theft. Those who have cast these off are virtuous":

"Those that have slain anger are the truly wise
Those who flourish in the wide earth are those who shun the company of evil men.

Those who know the world,
Those who have relieved the fierce hunger of suffering ones,

Those who know how to assuage the sufferings of men,
Those who are full of ceaseless love to all mankind,
Those that understand the lessons of goodly wisdom."

So the queen enlightened by this teaching bowed down before Maṇi-Mekhalai who said "Thou art the mother of my husband; Thou art the king's august spouse; it is not fitting that thou shouldst bow before me." So she herself, with love bowed down before the queen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE VISIT TO ĀPUTRAN'S LAND

Sittirāpati, the old grand-mother of Maṇi-Mekhalai hearing of the death of Utaya-Kumaraṇ who had pursued Maṇi-Mekhalai and had fallen by the sword of the Viñjayan, and that Maṇi-Mekhalai was in prison, was greatly troubled in mind, and presented herself before the queen exclaiming "Oh great Queen, Mātavi hearing of the death of Kōvalan has forsaken her

old immoral life and has gone into a home of ascetics while her daughter the dancing girl (meaning Maṇi-Mekhalai), has taken up a beggar's cup and goes from house to house soliciting alms. All this is mere laughable folly. Meanwhile, besides the death of Utaya-Kumaran, there is another great affliction which impends over the city from Māṇi-Mekhalai. I will tell you the story: Once on a day the king walking in a grove of trees saw a maiden of exceeding beauty, fell in love with her, and there enjoyed her society for a month, at the end of which time she departed. At that very time a Jain devotee possessed of miraculous powers came that way. Seeing him the king went and bowing down to him said 'a damsel dear to me as my life is somewhere hidden here, have you seen her? If so tell me'. That devotee replied 'I have not now seen her, but I knew her in former days, she is the daughter of the king of the Nāga-land, whose name is Vaḷai Vaṇan whose wife is Vāsamayilai. Her name is Pilivaḷai. When she was born, the astrologers said 'She would bear a child to the king of the Solar race'. This happened long ago, she is the damsel you seek. Her son will come to you, but she will return no more, do not be

troubled. One thing more I will tell thee; on the day that the feast of Indra is neglected, your city will be swallowed up by the sea, and this at the command of Maṇi-Mekhalai, the tutelary goddess. This is according to the curse of Indra, and will not fail. Therefore believing what I say to be true, see t' feast of Indra is duly kept each year, lest w-

swallowed up.' So saying he departed. From that day forth all the inhabitants of this city have lived in trembling anticipation of the destruction, and I too am in dread, lest the divinity Maṇi-Mekhalai hearing that the maiden who bears her name is suffering here, should come to put an end to it. Therefore, that the goddess may be favourable, give up the dancing girl to me

that she may return to my home." The queen hearing this replied:

"Drunkenness and lies and lust and murder foul

And theft are things that mighty souls reject.

But the life is an unclean one, for prostitution is thy cherished employment. This damsel shall not enter thy home; it is befitting that she remains with me." Now Mātavi hearing of the condition of Maṇi-Mekhalai, told the tidings to Sutamati and in distress they both of them sought Aṛvaṇa-Aḍigaḷ and told him, and together with him went to the queen to release her from her prison. As soon as the queen saw them, she rose up, went to meet the sage and bowed at his feet. He gave them his blessing saying 'May ye be blessed with wisdom'. They then placed him a seat of honour, washed his feet, and paid him all due respect, the Queen saying 'our good deeds have brought you hither, oh distinguished Sage:

Though thy words of wisdom never fail, mayest thou live
In this thine aged form for many a blesssd year!

He replied 'though I am still in this body, I am as a setting sun:

They are born, they are old, they suffer from disease,
And they are dead, so are men described.

He then taught her the twelve prime causes, the 'Nidānam', saying 'learn ye and cherish ever more virtue, thus live holily.' Afterwards addressing himself to Maṇi-Mekhalai he said 'after thou hast heard the religious teachings of the other sects, these too with all their developments, I will cause thee to understand'. He then rose to go. And Maṇi-Mekhalai rising bowed to him and said to the queen and the others 'forget ye not the words

of instruction which Aravaṇa-Aḍigaḷ has spoken, conduct yourselves in the way he has prescribed and since I remain in this city, they will daunt me with Utaya-Kumaran's name I will leave the city, will go to Āputran's land, with him will

visit Mani-Pallavam, will behold the shrine of Buddha, will then go to Vañji and after I have beheld the matron deity (Kaṇṇagi) I will go everywhere performing deeds of charity. Take no thought for me for no harm can befall me.' Thus saying she respectfully saluted them and after the sun had set, in the evening she went to the Choultry, where she devoutly walked round the shrine of Sambāpati and the pillar deity, and then flying forth, went forth and alighted in the grove which is in the precincts of the city of the 'Virtuous King' who is Indra's son. There she rested and seeing a sage, she respectfully saluted him and asked 'What city is this, and who is its king?' The Sage replied 'This is Nāgapuram, (Nāgpore). Its king is the virtuous king son of Bhūmi-chandran. From the time of his birth in this land rain has never failed; the earth, the trees, and everything else have flourished and yielded abundantly; and no living creature has suffered any pain.' Thus he uttered praises of the king.

CHAPTER XXV.

WITH ĀPUTRAN MAṆI-MEKHALAI VISITS THE MAṆI-PALLAVAM.

At that time the virtuous king together with his queen came into the grove and seeing the Sage called Dharma-Sāvagan began to question him:

"Of virtue and of vice, of things eternal, and things that pass away
Of sorrow and of the world where spirits dwell, of grief,
Of birth from clinging desires, and escape from all desire.
Of union with the lofy one, they asked him many things."

After that, "Who is this damsel here of surpassing beauty, who bears in her hand a beggar's cup, and asks for alms?" they asked. A courtier standing near respectfully replied "She is

one that has no equal, formerly I went to Kāvirip-Pūmpaṭṭinam to visit my friend Kiḷḷi-Vaḷavan and there Aravaṇa-Aḍigaḷ told me her whole history, this is the self-same damsel." Then Maṇi-Mêkhalai addressing herself to the king said "the cup that was in thy hand is now in mine, it would seem that your prosperity has bewildered you. What have you done? You must go to Maṇi-Pallavam and see the shrine of Buddha, or you cannot know the story of your former birth. Therefore, oh King, come thither with me." So saying she rose and passing through the air before the setting of the sun she alighted at the Maṇi-Pallavam, walked in worship around it, and beheld the shrine of Buddha. That revealed to her her former birth. While she stood there wrapped in amaze, the virtuous king leaving the grove and entering the city, came to his mother who had nursed, and asked her to tell him the history of his life, hearing which he was troubled and feeling disgust at his royal estate, announced his determination to renounce it and become an ascetic. His councillor called Janamittiran came forward and bowing before him said "Oh King mayest thou live happily, listen to my words, before thou becamest king of this land for twelve years, it was without rain and famine devastated the country. At that time in the midst of this suffering people, thou camest and all things have revived, and prospered under thy dominion. All living creatures have ceased to sorrow, and lived happy lives. If thou shouldst depart all living creatures like an infant, torn from its mother's bosom, will bewail their lot. If thou shouldst abandon the world, thus situated, desiring only thine own profit, it will be an unbefitting act.

"To think nothing of his own life, cherishing others' lives,
Is the virtue prescribed to the Lord of living men".

The King hearing this said "I have an unquenchable desire to visit Maṇi-Pallavam and worship the shrine. Therefore, I will go thither and return. For one month it shall be thy duty to rule and guard this city." So saying, he set out and

reaching the sea-shore embarked in a ship and sailed to Maṇi- Pallavam. Forthwith Maṇi-Mekhalai came and taking him with her, went round the island, and showed him the sacred shrine where men are taught the story of their former birth. The King beheld it and worshipped, and while he was so doing it revealed to him all his former embodiment. He then prais- ing the Chintādevi who had given him the unfailing cup arose and with Maṇi-Mekhalai went towards the South-west and re- mained in the shadow of a laurel tree on

the bank of the Gōmuki. Then, Tivatilakai aware of their presence came and said "Oh great one who didst relieve the pressing griefs of men, bearing in thy hand the cup that gives them food, these are the bodies of the nine merchants who died here; hearing of thy death when after having forgotten thee, they left thee alone on this island and sailed away, but remembering thee returned. Their companions hearing of their death also themselves died. Under the sand heaped up by the waves, beneath the shade of that laurel tree, reposes thy former body. Thou didst destroy thy life grieving for thy own life and so didst destroy the lives of others who came here the day after. Thou wert then no King but a murderer." She then turned to Maṇi-Mekhalai and said "The sea has swallowed up Kāvirip-Pümpaṭṭinam, I will tell thee why. Pilivaḷai, daughter of the King of the Nāga-land, together with the child she bore came to this island, and went round the

shrine worshipping and praising, and then Kambaḷa Chetti came in his ship to the island, and Pīlivaḷai came to him and said "This is the King's son; take him to his proper home"; and so saying she placed the infant in his arms. He greatly rejoicing re-embarked, but his ship was wrecked. Some on board escaped and went to Kāvirip-Pūmpaṭṭinam and told the King of the loss of his son. Hearing that, he was over-

whelmed with grief, and went wandering on the seashore, and so he forgot to celebrate the feast of Indra, and so the goddess Maṇi-Mekhalai was wroth and cursed the city. According to her curse the sea swept over it and the King departed to another land. Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ with Mātavi and Sutamati without any-

difficulty had reached the city of Vañji." When she had gone the virtuous King dug up the sand on the shore and seeing the bones of his former body was overcome with

grief. Maṇi-Mêkhalai comforted him, gave him needful spiritual in- struction and sent him back to his city. She herself passed through the air, and went to the city of Vañji.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MAṆI-MEKHALAI ENTERS THE GREAT CITY VANJI.

When Maṇi-Mêkhalai reached the city of Vañji she was filled with desire to sēe Kaṇṇagi and her father Kōvalan and accordingly went to the temple and worshipping Kaṇṇagi said "When your husband died, you knowing it did not die with him, nor perform the rites pertaining to widowhood; but in

your wroth you destroyed the city of Madura ; I pray you to tell me the reason why". The matron goddess Kaṇṇagi replied :" Unable to endure my grief for the death that befell my lord, I began to destroy Madura by fire, then Madurā-pati, the goddess of that city, appeared before me and said 'The suffering you have now endured is the punishment of a crime committed in a former birth, I will tell you of this : In former days Vasu, King of the city of Siṅgapuram in the land of Kaliṅga, and Kumaran, King of Kapilapuram, quarrelled and fought with one another. At that time a man who was selling merchandise in the bazaar-street of Siṅgapuram together with his wife was seen by Bharatan who was employed in the same city and had a spite against him. This Bharatan denounced that Saṅgaman as a spy of the enemy ; and so without having committed any fault Saṅgaman was slain by the King. His wife's name was Nīli. She overwhelmed with grief for her husband's murder, rushed to the crest of neighbouring mountain, resolved to throw herself down and die. Dying she uttered this imprecation 'may

those who have caused this sorrow suffer for it in another birth.
That Bharatan was born again as Kōvalan. Through that sin ye
have suffered. Each one must expiate the evil deeds one has
wrought in one birth by the sufferings of the next.' Hearing
this my anger was still not appeased and I caused the city to
be consumed with fire. On account of the good deeds we had
done, I and my husband have become gods, and as such are
worshipped here. When our good deeds have been fully
recorded and have been exhausted we shall yet doubtless have
to expiate the sins wrought in anger. Thus born again and

again, when our merits are exhausted we shall expiate our sins ;
and when these have been exhausted, born again and again our
virtues will be rewarded, thus we pass through the troublesome sea of changing embodiment. At the last in the country of
Magada and in the town of Kapilai the sun of Buddha shall
arise, and under the Bōdhi tree he will be seated in glory,
expounding the four fundamental truths and the twelve subsi-
diary docts, rine the truth concerning births and their cessations.
When he has expounded those and when pure light fills the
whole of this Chakra-vāḷam we shall hear those words of
teaching, renounce all and obtain Nīrvāṇa. Because of our
obtaining, this reward is the virtue that we

have acquired in
praising together with your father the seven changes of Indra
revealed in the Buddhist temple of Kavirip-Pūmpaṭṭinam. It
will be long before we attain that consummation. Ere that we
shall have performed many supernatural works. Meanwhile
hear thou the expositions of the leaders of all the differing sects,
and finding none of them reveal the truth, thou shalt cling to
the Buddhist faith." Hearing this Maṇi-Mēkhalai adored them
and pronouncing the spell by which her form was changed she
assumed the guise of a devotee, and departed praising the
great city of Seṅkuṭṭuvan, the Chēra King who reigns over the
renowned city of Vañji.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MANI-MEKHALAI HEARS THE TENETS OF THE VARIOUS SECTARIAN TEACHERS.

[As our object is to give a full account of the Buddhistic system as it is supposed to be taught to Maṇi-Mēkhalai we shall briefly summarize the account of the various sects appending a note to each].

Maṇi-Mēkhalai desirous to hear the teachings of the various sects first of all went to the Vēdic teachers of logic and said " expound to me your tenets." she went to the Šaivaite teachers ; then

Having heard these
to the Brahmavādi;
then to the Vaishnavaite; then to the expounder of the Vêdas; then to the Ājīvaka-Jains; then to the Nigaṇḍa-Jains; then to the Sāṅkhiyar; then to the Vaisēḍikar; and at last to the Bhūta-Vādis. Of all of these she learnt the tenets and passed on.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MAṆI-MEKHALAI ENTERS THE GREAT CITY KACHCHI.

After this Maṇi-Mekhalai anxious to meet Mātavi, Sutamati, and Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ passed through the outer city and entering Vañji beheld all the streets inhabited by all manner of castes, and the other places with great delight, entered at last into the monasteries where the Buddhist ascetics lived, and there met with Māṣāttuvān who was there living an ascetic life, and telling him all the particulars of her late wanderings, and of the teachings of the various sectaries to which she had

listened, made him acquainted with her whole history. Māsāttuvān having heard all she had to say thus addressed her: "It is my previously acquired merit that has brought me to become acquainted with you. I learned the whole history of

your father Kôvalan and your mother Kaṇṇaki and of the des- truction of Madura and thereupon I renounced all and entered the Buddhist monastery. I will tell you my special reasons
for this. In former times the king who ruled this city and who was called Neḍum-Śēralātan, lord of the Himalayan boundary together with his wives came forth one day into this Then some Jaina devotees who had been to Ceylon grove.
to the
mountain called Saman-Oḷi and having paid their devotions there, were returning along their aerial path and alighting in the grove remained in a cave. The King seeing them courte-

ously saluted them and supplied them with food. him:
They taught

'The sorrows of birth, the bliss of release
The truths revealed by the sinless Sage
And poured into his ears sweet nectar of instruction

By which all sorrows may be transcended'.

At that time Kôvalan who had lived in the ninth preceding generation and had been a most intimate friend of that king came there, and hearing the discourses of those Jaina saints heaped together the huge wealth which he and his ancestors had in the way of virtue acquired, in seven days distributed , them all, amongst worthy suppliants, and devoted himself to the ascetic life. I, at that time, came to see the temple which he

had erected for the worship of the Divine Buddha. I then heard how the sea had swallowed up Kävirip-Pūmpaṭṭinam and so I did not pursue my journey thither, but came to this place to dwell. Thy father had been slain because of evil deeds; and because of good deeds had become a divinity; and afterwards shall obtain the heavenly rest, having heard the instructions given by the divine Buddha. This I learnt from those who knew. So I will hear the same words of virtue. I learnt from Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ that thou hadst learnt from the pillar-god the information regarding thy future life. That sage thinking that thou wouldst learn from him the perfect way at the city of Kāñji has gone thither, and with him Mātavi

and Sutamati.

Moreover there is intense poverty and want in the city of Kāñji

owing to the failure of rain. Many living beings are perishing there. These sages have come hither because there they found none to give them charitable aid, it is therefore your duty to go thither and save the lives of all the sufferers there." Hearing this, Maṇi-Mêkhalai reverentially saluting him and taking the food-cup in her hand, ascended into the sky from the western quarter of Vañji, proceeded northward to Kāñji whose good fortune had departed and was suffering from famine. See- ing the city of Kāñji thus shorn of all its beauty, her soul was filled with pity and making her way by the right path, she alighted in the midst of it, and paying reverence to the Buddhist temple which had been erected by Iḷaṅ-Kiḷḷi the assistant of

Toḍu-Kaḷar-Kiḷḷi, she went to the south-west of it and abode in a grove. One who saw her, hurried to the king and said "Oh king, Kôvalan's daughter has come; she is one made glorious by ascetic deeds. She is the most glorious of all who dwell in this Jambu island! In her hand she bears the
vessel called 'The Food Cup'. In this city she dwells in a
charity-hall." The king hearing this, said " What the god of the pillar formerly told us, was true," and adoring that
divinity, he set out with his courtiers to where Maṇi-Mêkhalai
was, and thus addressed her:

"Did the sceptre swerve from right? paid?

Was devotion wrongly

Were the women richly adorned devoid of modesty?

Oh beauteous mate with virtue crowned! This ere-while happy

land

Is in affliction's grasp, and I know not the reason why.

"Tell me now what shall we do. My mind is sorely troubled, a great divinity in my distress appeared to me and said 'grieve not ; through thy merit a damsel will here appear ; in her hand she will bring a divine cup from which the more is poured forth, the more it brims with its supply. By this shall all the world be saved ; through her grace the clouds shall pour forth abundant rain ; many are the wonders she shall work here.

Though the heavens not water shall not fail. Prepare for her

reception ; make a tank called Gômugi and an island around it called Maṇi-Pallavam. So will

we fondly call them.' So she said and departed. I have done all according to her command. Here is your abode." And so he showed her an island, a grove and a lake like those she knew. Maṇi-Mêkhalai made there an altar of Buddha where the knowledge could be gained of former births, with shrines for Tivatilakai and the tutelary goddess Maṇi-Mêkhalai. There she placed the 'food-cup ' which men call the "Ambrosia of Life" and invited all to come and partake of the heavenly food, and so:

Men who spoke the eighteen languages were there The blind, the deaf, the halt, the lame.
Those who had no help, the dumb, the sick
Those wasted with disease, those suffering from famine sore Those afflicted with poverty,
Hundreds of thousands of living creatures
And living men were gathered there.

And so they ate, and the food increased still,

hunger and famine were driven away; through this virtuous gift, everywhere the rains poured down. The fields were rich with produce. Aṟavaṇa Aḍigaḷ hearing of these things, with Mātavi and Sutamati came to the hall of charity. Maṇi-Mekhalai hastened to greet them with devout affection, placed the sage on a fitting seat, and after all fitting rites, fed him with food of all six flavours, saying "May the virtuous acts I have performed fail not, but yield their fruit." So saying again she worshipped his feet.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MANI-MEKHALAI ENTERS ON THE ASCETIC LIFE.

Aṟavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ informed Maṇi-Mekhalai of the destruction of Kāvirip-Pūm-Paṭṭinam on account of the non-observance of the feast of Indra, on account of the sorrow of the king for the loss of the infant which Piḷivaḷai had borne to him.

This had occurred on account of the curse pronounced by Maṇi-Mêkhala the goddess, and the curse of Iṇdra. He told her also of the escape of himself and her mother.

Maṇi-Mêkhalai told him that Tivatilakai, the guardian of the Buddhist Shrine at Maṇi-Pallavam, had already given her this intelligence; that she herself, assuming another form, had been to Vañji, and had there heard the exposition of the various sects given by their teachers which she found altogether unsatisfactory to her mind; and that consequently she had now come to Kachchi in her own form, and wished to place herself under his tuition. "Give to me, your humble servant, to know and understand the truth," was her final prayer. Accordingly he gave her the preliminary logical teaching in regard to (1) demonstration of truth, (2) inference, and (3) fallacies to be dealt with under each head. "These", said he, "are the instruments by which you must acquire and verify your knowledge."

CHAPTER XXX.

MANI-MEKHALAI RECEIVES THE FINAL REVELATION OF THE TRUTH.*

And now Maṇi-Mekhalai who had given herself up to charitable works, who had also obtained pre-eminence in virtue, and had attained the knowledge of her former embodiments
repeated the three formulas. "I go to Buddha's foot for

* This chapter brings Maṇi-Mêkhalai almost to her goal. The pilgrimage is ended; she has but to enter into her rest. The main stages in her pilgrimage are marked out by (1) what we have called her **Conversion.** (2) The second stage is marked by her experiences in the **Crystal Pavilion.** (3) The next stage is connected with her experiences in the **Mani-Pallavam,** where she again obtains certain revelations connected with her previous embodiments, and receives the miraculous cup: the

refuge," "I go for refuge to Virtue's Self," "I go for refuge to the Assembly;" and having thrice adored the three gems she became the disciple of Aṛavaṇa-Aḍigaḷ. He first of all beginning to teach her the holy doctrine said: "When all living creatures were void of knowledge, through the intercession of the gods, the divine Buddha coming down from the Tuḍita world became incarnate in this, and seated under a fig tree examined and obtained the complete knowledge of the truth of things. He conquered Māran and utterly destroyed the three

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cornucopia from which she dispenses her world-wide charity. (4) The next stage is connected with her husband, which lead to her imprisonment. (5) The next stage is connected with Aputran, who is shown to us as the Dharma-Rajā of Nāgpoor. (6) After this we find her in Vañji (Karūr), where she comes into connexion with her father, mother by adoption and others. (7) We next find her in converse with the leading teachers of the various conflicting sects that existed in South India. (8) She now passes to Kachchi whose wonders she examines while carrying on her beneficient work. (9) She now puts herself entirely under the tuition and guidance of Aravaṇa-Aḍigaḷ, who has all along directed her movements. Here she receives her logical training by which she is prepared for initiation. (10) The concluding chapter shows her receiving the esoteric teaching of the Buddhist system which we shall give under various heads.

I. She is made more fully acquainted with the history and work of the great Buddha.

II. The four truths: (i) Sorrows, (ii) the cause of sorrow, (iii) the removal of sorrow, (iv) the way to the removal of sorrow.

III. The five Gandas: (i) Form, (ii) Vēdanā, (iii) Kurippu, (iv) Bhāvanā, (v) Viññānam.

IV. The twelve Sārvu: (i) Ignorance, (ii) action or conduct, (iii) knowledge or consciousness, (iv) dislike, (v) cause, (vi) evil, (vii) enjoyment, (viii) desire, (ix) adherence or love, (x) birth, (xi) creation and (xii) effect.

V. The six Usages.

VI. The four Benefits.

VII. The four Questions and Replies.

VIII. The five Bhāvanā.

A summary of each of these heads of teachings is all that can here be given.

faults. His memorial word is this "that which an infinite number of Buddha's being incarnated taught in grace is this". He then caused her to understand the twelve propositions

regarding folly and the others, saying "Be thou freed from mental darkness," and showed her the lamp of wisdom. So she hearing these things and receiving them without doubt or wavering performed her penances yearning ever for the cessation of embodiment and its sorrows.